

Biographies of Indonesian Composers

from *Bakers Biographical Dictionary of Composers, eighth edition*

written by Jody Diamond

based on field work conducted in Indonesia in 1988-89

© 2001 all rights reserved

[R.L. Martopangrawit](#)

[I Wayan Sadra](#)

[Sukerta, Pande Made](#)

[Suratno, Nano \(Nano S.\)](#)

[Siagian, Rizaldi](#)

[Sidarta, Otok Bima](#)

[Subono, Blacius \(B.\)](#)

[Subowo, Yohanes Y.\)](#)

[Sutanto](#)

[Suwardi, Aloysius \(A.L.\)](#)

[Syukur, Slamet Abdul](#)

R.L. Martopangrawit

4 April 1914 — April 17, 1986

Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia

An extremely important and highly respected teacher, musician, theorist and composer from Surakarta, Central Java, Indonesia. Born into a family with many generations of royal musicians, he became a member of the royal gamelan at the Kraton Surakarta at the age of 13. He was a teacher in the music department at S.T.S.I. Surakarta for many years. Considered one of the most excellent traditional musicians, he was also famous for his many inventive compositions, numbering more than 100 pieces in a variety of styles. As a theorist he was prolific and influential, writing more than 18 books on music theory for Central Javanese gamelan. He was active in the preservation and development of many classical music and dance forms, particularly those associated with the palace (Kraton) Surakarta.

1948 joined the offices of the Central Javanese Ministry of Education and Culture

1951 joined the faculty at Konservatori Karawitan, the high school music conservatory in Surakarta

1964 joined the faculty at A.S.K.I. (now S.T.S.I.) Surakarta, the college level music conservatory, where he taught until his death

AWARDS

1973 Model Citizen of the city of Surakarta

1977 honored by the President of the Republic of Indonesia

1984 promoted to "Bupati Anon-anon" at the Kraton Surakarta, and given the honorary title Raden Tumenggung Martodipura.

SELECTED WRITINGS

Many of Martopangrawit's writings are collections of musical notation, either of his own pieces or repertoire that he was researching and documenting. The exception is a major treatise on Javanese musical theory, *Pengetahuan Karawitan* [The Theory of Classical Javanese Music]. This has been translated into English by Martin Hatch, and appears in the collection *Karawitan* (Vol. I), published by the University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, edited by Judith Becker and Alan Feinstein. His books are published by S.T.S.I. Surakarta in Central Java; some of them are distributed internationally by the American Gamelan Institute (Hanover, NH USA)

Dibuang Sayang. A collection of vocal music for male chorus. Edited by Rahayu Supanggah. Seti-Atji and ASKI Surakarta: Surakarta. 1988

Gending-gending Martopangrawit. Surakarta: ASKI. 1968 A collection of his own compositions

Pengetahuan Karawitan, Vol. I, II. The theory of Central Javanese classical music.

Titilaras Kendangan. A book of drumming notation.

Titilaras cengkok-cengkok genderan dengan wiledannya, I, II. A massive compendium of melodic patterns used by the *gender*, an important instrument in the Javanese gamelan.

Lagu dolanan lare-lare. A collection of children's songs

Lagu dolanan anggitan Martopangrawit. Children's songs by the composer.

COMPOSITIONS

A paper by Waridi, a faculty member at S.T.S.I. Surakarta, lists 53 compositions by Martopangrawit. The earliest is dated 1939, *Ladrang Biwadhapraja*. His last composition, written in the year of his untimely death, was *Ra Ngandel*.

Ladrang Cikar Bobrok 1943, Ketawang Pamegatsih 1966, Ketawang ASKI, Ladrang Asri 1946, Ladrang Gandasuli 1946, Lancaran Kebat 1961, Ladrang Lo Kowe Nang 1954, Gending Parisuka 1982, Lancaran Uyal-uyel 1962, Mijil Anglir Mendung 1981, Gending Sayuk 1050, Nglara Ati 1970

Sukerta, Pande Made

born 1953 in Tekakula, Singaraja, Bali, Indonesia

In 1964, began to be active in music groups that played in the temple activities of both his birthplace and elsewhere. In 1970, entered the high school level music conservatory in Denpasar, Bali, in the (Balinese) music department. One of his specialities at that time was the bowed double-string fiddle called *rebab*. In 1973, he entered A.S.K.I. Surakarta, graduating in 1979. While he was at A.S.K.I. (college level traditional music conservatory) he founded and directed the Balinese gamelan groups, as well as participating in rehearsals and performances of a new style of music called "Eksperimen Karawitan Baru", or new experimental music on traditional instruments. He became a teacher of Balinese music and composition at A.S.K.I. (later renamed S.T.S.I.). His approach to teaching composition emphasizes the exploration of new sounds; his classes are like small workshops where students improvising and experiment to find new sounds in a wide variety of material -- working with gamelan instruments as well as "found" instruments like glasses, marbles, tin roofing, crunchy shrimp and rice crackers and the human body. He is known for encouraging his students to be "crazy" and not to be afraid to try something new.

He has been a participant at Jakarta's Young Choreographers' Festival (1978), and Young Composers' Festival in 1979, 81, 84. At the Indonesian Pavilion at EXPO'86 in Vancouver, Canada, his composition "Asanawali" for Balinese gamelan and chorus was performed as part of the first International Gamelan Festival, sharing a program with the Vancouver Symphony's performance of pieces by Debussy and Colin McPhee. This piece is also on a cassette issued by the Indonesian national recording company, Lokananta. the cassette is title Bajra Danta, and it is distributed internationally by AGI in Hanover NH.

He was one of seven composers in 1989 to be commissioned by the American Gamelan Institute for a new music recording; his piece Mana 689 used drums from Java, Sunda and Sumatra, bottles and marbles, a chanting priest, screaming children (two of his own four), and many other instruments as well. His wife, a Javanese dancer, also is on the staff at S.T.S.I. As a musician he has toured to France, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, Iran, Australia, Canada, USA

He is quite industrious and prolific as a writer as well, spending long hours transcribing Balinese melodies of various styles from recordings. Several books of these collections have been published by A.S.k.i. As a member of the faculty, he has also taught at other national conservatories in Indonesia, including A.S.T.I. Bandung, the dance and arts academy of West Java.

FROM THE INTERVIEW: Pande Made Sukerta

"We know our tradition, it is our capital. If we want to "buy" something, we already have money saved up. But I think we must have two pairs of glasses. If we are going to play traditional music, we wear the glasses of tradition. But if we wear those glasses for [a new piece], like something by Suwardi, there will be a conflict, an [inner] war. In traditional music, we know what things are called, we know certain patterns and forms that must be followed. In a new composition, there is a form, but it is not like the ones we know already. Many things can happen. If we are doing a composition, we must ask questions: what can we do, how will we do it, what else can be done? We must ask questions continuously.

"I think the hardest thing about making a composition is connecting one section with another. If one part is too strong, the second section may have no voice. Its easy to just explore, but to arrange the new sounds in a structure is difficult. But all we can do is try!

"One of the difficulties in developing new composition is that there is not always a perceived 'need' for them the way there is for certain traditional pieces. So if people don't feel these need new compositions, how are we to perform them again? The pieces don't last long. The traditional pieces ar like fish in a can, it can last a long time and still be good. But, at least for now, compositions are like fish that we take out of the ocean, and then just leave there to rot, we can't eat them again. But this might change. When people need new compositions as part of their daily lives, it will also become a traditional. If you don't think you need it, even gold could be thrown away!

COMPOSITIONS for Balinese gamelan, Javanese gamelan, found instruments, and various combinations of those. One can assume that he has created dozens of pieces over the years, because he is quite well known and active, and so many of his works are partly improvised, created with very little rehearsal, and only performed once.

Malam; Demung; Gora Suara in 1981; Mana 689 in 1989; Saik 789 in 1989; Asanawali

WRITINGS Work in progress, as of mid 1989, included an extended essay on the process of composition, an encyclopedia of Balinese instruments, and the transcription of melodies from an archaic Balinese ensemble called Gambuh.

Gending-gending Semar Pegulingan Saih Pitu. A.S.K.I., 1977. 77 pp.

Rebaban Karawitan Bali. 1979. 17 pp.

Gending-gending Gong Gede. 77 pp. Notation for 24 pieces.

Suratno, Nano (known as Nano S.)

born: 4 april 1944

Pasar Kemis Tarogong Garut, West Java, Indonesia

member, BMI

One of the most famous and important Indonesian composers, from the area of Sunda (West Java.) Born in Garut. Father was a merchant who loved the arts, Nano was his sixth child. His great grandfather was a puppet master (dalang). Studied singing with his grandparents. Four teachers he most remembers and respects: Daeng Sutikna, who introduced him to diatonic music; Syafei, literature; Tjetje Somantri, a famous choreographer and dancer; and Mang Koko, by whom Nano was so impressed that he became inspired to be a musician and composer. His first composition was in 1963; in that year he also began to have his poetry published in a local newspaper. He formed his own dance group and then joined Mang Koko's group Ganda Mekar. To date he has written over 400 songs; about 200 of them have been recorded and released commercially in Indonesia.

After working with Mang Koko, Nano wanted to do creative work that differentiated him from his teacher. He developed those areas in which Mang Koko was less prolific. This led to composing for *degung*, a traditional Sundanese chamber ensemble of tuned gongs, drums, and a bamboo flute, as well as many songs with the theme of young love. Nano also began to write 'karawitan total', instrumental music that could stand alone. Began with music for the film *Dia Yang Kembali*. [the one who returned].

In 1979, his composition "Sangkuriang" was performed at the *Pekan Komponis Muda* (Young Composers Festival, probably the most important national venue for new (experimental) music in Indonesia, in particular those pieces that use traditional instruments in new ways. He also mounted "Umbul-umbul" for Indonesian television in Bandung, a composition that entailed 75 players in a mixture of over 15 different Sundanese styles.

Has won, in several recent years, a national award of "best regional composer" for his prolific and successful song writing activities. Won a big award in 1989 from the cassette company HDX for the great success of his piece "Kalangkang." Writes in both traditional (what we might call classical) styles as well as pop, and is known to invent new ensembles by creating music for previously unassociated instruments. He has over 200 cassettes (and in Indonesia cassettes are the equivalent of LP's or CD's here, not at all an inferior media) on the market, and a cassette with the name "Nano S." on it, even if only one piece is his, is sure to do well.

Nevertheless, he has had trouble finding a market for his compositions that he calls "musik total" or "musik murni" (pure music). these are, by and large, instrumental pieces, yet very emotionally expressive. Since the Sundanese market likes songs with romantic or dramatic lyrics, producers are reluctant to release songs without words. The exception is classical instrumental ensembles, for which Nano S. does a considerable amount of work. His more experimental instrumental work has found an easier audience in the U.S. than in Indonesia, where he presents concerts when visiting as a guest teacher, and some of his recordings are distributed by the American Gamelan Institute in Hanover NH.

He is sometimes criticized for being more of a pop songwriter than a serious composer, but since he is equally successful in both, one is inclined to believe his explanation that he does the first in order to finance the second.

A student of the great Sundanese composer Mang Koko, Nano directed many recordings of Mang Koko's music, before eventually setting off in search of his own style. He encourages

his own students to , likewise, seek new ground rather than imitate him.

Nano S. has great concern for the youth of Sunda, and makes considerable efforts to get them involved in and more appreciative of traditional Sundanese music. No small indication of his dedication in this regard is the fact that he teaches at the high school level music conservatory, S.M.K.I., rather than at the college level (or even just working as an independent composer). He will often take older classical melodies, for example from the repertoire of the *degung* ensemble, and then re-set them to more popular tastes, for example, by re-orchestrating the piece for synthesizer, flute, etc (standard western pop instrumentation), or re-doing the melody as an up-beat gamelan piece with lyrics about lost love and romantic intrigue. Then the young Sundanese, sometimes without even knowing it – as Nano describes almost gleefully – will be humming, enjoying and preserving music from their past.

In all of this arranging and mixing of traditions, he is always true to the Sundanese arts; his mission is to increase appreciation and love for the wide variety of Sundanese arts, primarily among the Sundanese people, but elsewhere as well. Because of this commitment, he never borrows from outside his traditions or composes in the diatonic tuning of the west, although he is well aware of other musics. This is also meant to counter the modern idea that for something to be popular it has to be "western" or have some western elements.

While most of his works are in the regional language of Sundanese (a Sanskrit family language), Nano has also created pieces with lyrics in the more "modern" national language of Indonesian and even in English, knowing that these have great appeal to contemporary youth. One example is the piece "*Malem Minggu*" ("Saturday Night"), where a young man's "dating program" is interrupted by the appearance of his sweetheart's father. He was also one of seven Indonesian composers commissioned by the American Gamelan Institute to create new works; he responded with two instrumental pieces, one, "Jemplang Polansky" was inspired by the Nano's confusion upon listening to the computer music of Larry Polansky, the other "*Galura*" (emotion), is a instrumental solo piece for *kecapi* (plucked zither) that expresses a range of emotions without any text, a somewhat unusual occurrence in Sundanese music.

Nano had had considerable international experience. He has taught and toured in Japan, Canada and the U.S. In 1989 he was a guest teacher and composer at the University of California at Santa Cruz. In 1990 he was the tour director for the program "Sunda: from Village to City" that toured the U.S. as part of a year long "Festival of Indonesia." Again, showing his commitment to young artists, he often uses the occasion of a tour to give international experience to a young talent who has not had the opportunity to travel; he is always watching out for his students and encouraging them.

He has built a special traditional music building next to his modest house in Bandung; here, along with his wife, the beautiful and highly admired singer Dheniarsah (married in 1970), and their associated students and fellow artists, he is able to mount special performances for foreign visitors from Holland, Germany and Japan. His home is always full of Sundanese visitors as well: a television producer asking Nano to do a special program on his music, a singer asking him to write her a song, a young musician seeking advice.

He has two children, a son and a daughter. They have not decided to become artists, although the son plays guitar and especially likes the Beatles.

EDUCATION — dates of graduation

1958 public elementary school

1961 public high school

1964 Konser, high school music conservatory, in Bandung

1978 ASTI, college level music conservatory in Bandung

1989 equivalent of master's degree from STSI Surakarta

TOURS; to Japan, 1988; Canada, 1986

COMPOSITIONS

Nano prepared a list of 78 of his cassettes that were on the market as of 1989. It shows that he worked in many styles, with several different groups, and with various recording companies. The musical genres listed are: *degung, kacapian, gamelan, kacapi biola, jaipongan, prakpilingkung, tarling, calung, qasidah, band, kliningan wanda anyar, pop Sunda, pop degung.*

COMPOSITIONS: ORDERED BY YEAR

Bubat degung 1978

Ki Lagoni operetta 1967

Raja Kecil operetta 1974

Sangkuriang gamelan 1979

Umbul-umbul multi-ensembles 1984

Hayo Ngawi song [first piece] 1963

Sekar Manis kacapi 1980

Malem Minggu prakpilingkung 1985

Anjeun degung instrumental 1986

Kalangkang degung 1986

Kangen degung 1987

Kalangkang jaipongan 1987

Kalangkang band (western) 1987

Kalangkang kliningan wanda anyar 1988

Tibelat pop sunda 1988

Cinta pop degung 1988

Galura kecapi solo 1988

Jemplang Polansky mixed ensemble 1989

Love Smir/Parkir gamelan 1990

Warna gamelan 1990

Kareseman gamelan 1990

COMPOSITIONS: ORDERED BY TITLE

Anjeun degung instrumental 1986

Bubat degung 1978
Cinta pop degung 1988
Galura kecapi solo 1988
Hayo Ngawi song [first piece] 1963
Jemplang Polansky mixed ensemble 1989
Kalangkang band (western) 1987
Kalangkang degung 1986
Kalangkang jaipongan 1987
Kalangkang kliningan wanda anyar 1988
Kangen degung 1987
Kareseman gamelan 1990
Ki Lagoni operetta 1967
Love Smir/Parkir gamelan 1990
Malem Minggu prakpilingkung 1985
Raja Kecil operetta 1974
Sangkuriang gamelan 1979
Sekar Manis kacapi 1980
Tibelat pop sunda 1988
Umbul-umbul multi-ensembles 1984
Warna gamelan 1990

WRITINGS

In addition to music, he writes poetry and short stories, mostly in Sundanese. He has also written the text for many operettas, for which he was also the composer.

Mengolah Seni Pertunjukan Sebagai Media Penerangan, 1989 [development of the performing arts as an information media]

He has written the text and music for over 15 operettas, including *Bunga & Remaja*, [flowers and youth], *Remaja Bercinta* [Young people in Love]

presentation and paper: "Kacapi – Melody – and Heart" 1989

Haleuang Tondang, book of songs, published by Paramaatha, Bandung, 1975

Siagian, Rizaldi

[early 1950's, birthdate unknown,]

Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia

The following selections are from an interview conducted at the composer's house in Medan in 1989. (Translated from the Indonesian by Jody Diamond.)

"I don't call myself a composer although I often write songs, but I don't have a traditional [Sumatran music] background. My musical background is really in Western music. I played urban pop music in the late sixties, as a drummer, guitarist and singer. In the seventies I got interested in traditional Sumatran music. ... I felt I had to completely immerse myself in traditional music in order to play and feel it right. Much later, when I composed, I finally found a way to combine modern and traditional elements. ... Now I want to make something that is of the tradition, so I am working with the gambus. I want the urban people of North Sumatra to get used to the traditional instruments, to see them as a source of sound that can be used in a creative way."

Siagian has been very active as an educator, particularly as the head of the ethnomusicology program at the University of North Sumatra. He also participates in several independent music groups, including the one that plays his own compositions. In 1991, he will lead a tour group of Batak musicians from the Lake Toba area of North Sumatra on a tour in the United States as part of the Festival of Indonesia.

EDUCATION

1982 B.A. from Univeristy of North Sumatra

1985 M.A. from San Diego State University, master's thesis on South Indian drumming

current position: head of ethnomusicology department at University of North Sumatra (USU)

ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

1989 director of a music group performing at the National Palace in Jakarta

1988 composer for dance by H. Jose Rizal Firdaus at the Sumatran Dance Festival in Panjang, West Sumatra

1987 artisitc director for performance of North Sumatran music for Cultural Festival Celebration of North Sumatra

1987 director of performance of North Sumatran music in Den Haag, Netherlands

1984 one of several composers to wirk on the film "Indonesia Indah" bby McGleavery Film Co., Laguna, Calif.

1981 performance with the group Ansambel Bukit Barisan at the royal Albert Hall in London

COMPOSITIONS

Many pop music arrangements from 1970-1980

(began composing in 1986)

Lebah, a dance accompaniment, for tube zither, drum, shawm, slit drum, cymbal, and voice

Gambus Menjelang Magrib (1987), for gambus, voice, frame drum, harmonium, violin

Gambus Kehendak in 7, for gambus, Malaysian drum, taganing, gong, lonceng, harmonium, violin, hasapi, tube zither, voice

Gambus Binal (same instrumentation as Gambus Kehendak)

18 May 1960

Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Active as a composer, teacher, dancer, painter and journalist. Father, **Bagong Kussudiarja (BK)**, is one of Indonesia's most famous choreographers and painters; brother is the composer Djaduk Ferianto. founded several groups to perform music of various kinds. One, PLK (Pusat Latihan Karawitan) Music Study Center, consists of many of Yogya's best young musicians. Sidarta encourages all of them to compose, and has devised a new notation system that the group uses for their own rehearsals. His musical innovations include the addition to the gamelan of hand-held percussion instruments like bells, triangles, claves, etc., as well as the development of new percussive techniques for existing instruments, eg. placing hanging gongs horizontally on cloth and striking them muted. Also created a personal drumming style that is a combination of Javanese, Sundanese and unique elements.

Active as a painter since 1975. has participated in several exhibitions and has some paintings in an art gallery in Bali as well as at the Consulate in Los Angeles.

Born into an environment of dance and arts, a world of dance, music and visual arts. Feels that Javanese culture needs to be guarded, perpetuated, developed. Says his personal credo is: I am not you, but I want to be you. This reminds him that all people are different, but that one should look for and understand those differences as a way of being close to others and at the same time valuing their diversity.

EDUCATION AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES

[items with a * are what I consider most important in his development as a composer]

1967 *started studying dance at **PLT --Pusat Latihan Tari** (Center for Dance Study) founded by his father, BK

1979 * studied music at S.M.K.I. (Sekolah Menengah Karawitan Indonesia), a high-school level music conservatory, in Yogyakarta

-- *studied Yogyanese style dance at the school (PBN, Pamulangan Beksa Nyayogyakarta) founded by Romo Sasminta Mardawa, a very important dancer and choreographer

-- toured with BK group to Switzerland, West Germany, Paris, France and Holland

1980 to Los Angeles to work at the Indonesian Consulate

1981 participated in the World Music Festival at California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, CA

-- worked at the Indonesian Cultural Center in Los Angeles

-- studied ballet and jazz dance with the Duppre [sic] Dance Academy in Hollywood

1982 participated in the Rainbow Festival in Marina Del Rey, CA; the Asian Awareness Week at Pasadena City College, a performance at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and a World Music Festival in San Diego

1983 participant in Asian Pacific Cultural Festival at Loyola Marymount College, CA

1984 return to Indonesia.

*-- founded the music group "**Kelompok Musik Sempu**" (**KMS**) and won first place in the "best creativity" category at the Acoustic Music Competition '84.

1985 taught dance and music for 6 months in Sumatra

-- became increasingly active in the *Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiarja* (PSBK) [BK Residential Arts Center]

1986 tour to Art Festival in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with group from BK PLT

-- taught dance and music for dance for three months in Kuala Lumpur

-- presented a solo performance, with KMS called "Pop Alternatif"

1987 participant in ASEAN workshop on Liturgy and Music in Manila, Philippines

*-- performed composition *Meja, meja* [table, table] at PSBK concert titled Experimental Arts I.

*-- collaborated on and performed the collective composition "Antara Tugu Ngejaman" with brother Djaduk Ferianto at the Composers' Festival VII in Jakarta

*-- founded the music group *Sanggar Dolanan Anak-anak Among Siswa Yogyakarta* to perform children's songs. this group then gave their first performance, in Yogyakarta

1988 tour with BK to Olympics in Seoul and Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia

*-- founded *Pusat Latihan Karawitan Yogyakarta* (PLK), Center for the Study of Music (ie. Javanese music)

1989 *founded and coordinated the first composition festival, for new music using Javanese gamelan, in Yogyakarta: *Lomba Komposisi Karawitan I*. in cooperation with PSBK and the Yogyakarta Arts Council [video tape of entire festival in the Archives of the American Gamelan Institute in Hanover NH]

COMPOSITIONS

choreography: Sasap, 1978; Gothak Gathuk, 1979; Kelahiran, 1981; Gerka Suara Nusantara, 1981; Gaung Kaputren, Santyang, Kasonangane, 1985; Lima Alit, 1988

music for dance accompaniment: since 1984, working alone and collectively, many works for dances created by BK and other artists in Yogyakarta. Among them: Lintasan Sejarah Kebangkitan Nasional, Lintasan Sejarah ABRI [armed forces], Sendratari Kelahiran

theater: several works of music for folk theatre, called *ketoprak*, by groups in Yogyakarta, performed at various art centers and on TVRI (Indonesian National Television) in Yogyakarta and Jakarta

compositions (karawitan), for Javanese gamelan: Meja meja, 1987; Antara Tugu Ngejaman" with Djaduk Ferianto; 1988 — Sang Pahlawan, Lesehan, Sibab, 511 (the last three were performed on television, and recordings of them are at AGI) **pop songs;** 1983 — Kemuning (judged among the ten best at a Pop music Festival in Los Angeles; 1984 — Sempu, Opera Perdamaian; 1985 — Mars Poralap; 1986 — Bunga Bangsa; 1989 — Mubeng Beteng (commissioned and recorded by AGI)

Subono, Blacius

Klaten, Central Java, Indonesia

3 February 1954 —

Born into an artistic family, Subono was the seventh of nine children who all became successful artists. His father was the *dhalang* (shadow puppet master) Yusuf Kiyatdiharjo; his mother was Theresia Suparti. Beginning his music studies at six years of age, he often accompanied his father. At 12 he began to perform on his own as a dhalang. While in the high

school conservatory he helped create a new form of puppet theater, *Wayang Kancil*, featuring a cast of animal characters and new musical arrangements. At the college conservatory ASKI (now STSI), he was encouraged by then director S.D. Humardani to try musical experimentation. He soon became the composer for several new works, including another wayang innovation, the now well-known *Wayang Sandosa*, and in 1983 he was invited to the national Composer's Festival in Jakarta. He is often commissioned for new compositions in music and for dance, as well as to perform the nine-hour wayang kulit. He has performed and taught abroad many times, including in 1990 at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada, where he created his first composition with an English text. His compositional style ranges from very popular songs with gamelan accompaniment, to extremely strong experimental ideas, such as a chamber ensemble of only very high pitched instruments (*Griting Rasa*), a composition for a wide range of only knobbed gongs (*Swara Pencon*), and some unrealized pieces for very large chorus.

EDUCATION

1969 elementary school in Klaten

1973 high school in Klaten

1976 KOKAR (high school music conservatory) in Surakarta

1984 ASKI (now S.T.S.I.) in Surakarta; college level music conservatory. degree of S.Kar. (Sarjana Karawitan, similar to Bachelor's of Music)

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

staff trainer in arts technique in the field of music and puppet theater for all of Central Java in 1980-85 and 1987

member of the jury for all-Central Java competition in *pakeliran padat* (intensified puppet theater) in 1982, 1984, 1986, 1988.

member of the jury for for Javanese folk music in the city of Surakarta, 1983.

participant in regional meetings on many kinds of dance, drama, musical theater and literature in Central Java since 1980

member of tour groups to France (1982), Singapore (1982), England and Spain(1984), Canada and U.S.A. (1986)

COMPOSITIONS (all for Central Javanese gamelan)

for dance: Komposisi Hitam Putih, 1980; Rudrah, 1981; Bisma Gugur, 1982; Ronggolawe Gugur, 1982; Anoman Katakini, 1986; Anila Prahastho, 1985; Jemparingan, 1985; Kusumo Asih, 1983; Rahwana Gandrung, 1987; Gathutkaca Burisrawa, 1985; Bhagawatgita, 1985

for shadow puppet theater (*pakeliran padat*): Kilat Buana, 1984; Duryudana Gugur, 1985; Gandamana Tundhung, 1985; Kangsa Lena, 1983

for dance opera (*wayang orang*): Seno Kridho, 1984

for modern shadow puppet theater (*Wayang Sandosa*): Karna Tandhing, 1982; Dewa Ruci, 1983; Ciptaning, 1984

experimental compositions:

Swara Pencon, 1983; Swara Pencon II, 1986, Griting Rasa, 1989

songs with gamelan:

Surakarta Lajer Budaya, 1982; Kidang Kencana , 1980; Solo Berseri, 1985; Air Minum, 1987; Urip Prasaja, 1987; Gotong Rpyong, 1985; Bingung, 1986; Pungjir, 1974; Sukaharja Papanku, 1987; Palinglih, 1987

script/manuscript for Wayang Kancil (shadow puppet theater with animal characters only): Kidang Pancal Panggung, 1972; Lurah Kancil, 1973; Kendhogo putih, 1973; Kancil Julike, 1974; Kridha Martaya, 1975

script/manuscript for Wayang Orang (dance opera): Bagawat Gita, 1983; Kumbakarna Gugur, 1985; Anoman Obong, 1983; Kangsa Lena, 1984

WRITINGS (In Indonesian) Most of these concern the musical accompaniment for the new, intensified style of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet theater).

1981 *Iringan Pakeliran Dewasa Ini.*

1982 *Konsep Iringan Pakeliran Padat.*

1984 *Kuliah Latihan Tabuh Iringan Pakeliran Padat di ASKI Surakarta.*

1985 *Kondisi Wayang Orang Sriwedari.*

1986 *Ruang Lingkup Catur.*

1987 *Evaluasi Garap Iringan Pakeliran Padat.*

Sutanto

5 february 1954

Magelang, Central Java, Indonesia

A young and sometimes radical composer. As a student at AMI, the Western music conservatory in Yogyakarta, he created controversy through several pieces that involved surprising not only the audience but the musicians as well. Has worked with experimental theater groups. Played piano concerts in Indonesia with Jack Body, the New Zealand composer teaching at AMI. His works have been played in Indonesia, England, Australia, New Zealand. Also a critic and journalist as well as a composer. Studied Western music for five years at AMI (Akademi Musik Indonesia), then a year of psychology, and two of literature.

Started a cultural center, Ritus Paguyuban (Insititute of Arts and Cultural Studies), with a regular publication, at his home in Magelang to attract young people to the arts, and is currently building a center at his new home near Candi Mendhut (on the road to Borobodur). Now considers himself a "social engineer" rather than a composer; arranges day-long conglomerations of performing groups from all the neighboring villages, including martial arts, folk music, trance dance, and experimental arts groups from the more urban Magelang. In 1989 he created a performance of *Wayang Imaginasi*, a one-hour shadow puppet play with no shadows and no puppets – as the puppet master tells the story and the gamelan plays, a painter stands at intervals and paints characters onto the screen.

EDUCATION

AMI Yogyakarta, studied composition with Jack Body, composer form New Zealand

SELECTED COMPOSITIONS

Apa, 1979; Sketsa Ide (3 violin 1979; *Wayang Imaginasi*, 1989, *Senam Flute* 1986, *Proses* 1977,

OPERAS

Musik Opera (Blues in My Shoes (2 guitar, piano and vocal), Waras Vs Gila, Pegawai Sinting) 1981, Suara Orang-orang Luka dan Lebaran '82 1982 (tape(music concrete), 50 dancers) premiered 23 July 1982

Ritus Paguyban. for nine different groups, a total of 74 players

I Wayan Sadra

Talented and active in music, he joined the neighborhood Balinese gamelan group at an early age. He specialized in traditional Balinese music, particularly gender wayang (music for the Balinese shadow play). It was his meeting with the experimental choreographer Sardono W. Kusumo that widened his perspective on the music, particularly his own. Worked with Sardono on a piece that involved the entire village of Teges, and eventually toured with that group to Europe and the Middle East.

In Paris he spent all his time and money going to galleries and concerts, returning home with only a few paints and a lot of new ideas. He supported himself in Jakarta through painting and teaching Balinese music at IKJ, but eventually chose to focus on music. His first compositions were for theater groups.

He was invited by H.D. Humardani, the director of ASKI to teach in Solo. At first he refused, but later after he was married, decided to accept the offer. Although Humardani had brought Sadra to teach composition, he suggested that Sadra enroll for an advanced degree as well, leading to his composition degree in 1988.

As a composer, he is concerned with not only the music itself, but with the social context of the performance, seeing the development of an audience to appreciate new music as important as the works themselves. He does not adhere to any one style or region -- thereby becoming more of an "Indonesian" composer than a "Balinese" one. His works are often for unusual combinations of instruments, ie.OAEO. He has also done several multi-media works, using painting, dancers, shadow puppets. At his piece in telluride the performers throw raw eggs at a heated black panel -- as the eggs cook, they provide both a visual and sound element for the closing of the piece.

Has worked as an improvising musician with many of Indonesia's experimental choreographers, notably Sardono Kusumo and a dance/mediation teacher in Solo named Suprpto. He once proposed a piece to the mayor of Solo, called "A City that plays music" , wherein the entire population of the city would make sounds together for a certain five minutes. The proposal was not accepted, but Sadra hopes it will be undertaken in the future.

Subowo, Yohanes

1 January 1960

Klaten, Central Java, Indonesia

Born into an artistic family, Subowo was the ninth of nine children who all became successful artists. His father was the dhalang (shadow puppet master) Yusuf Kiyatdiharjo; his mother was Theresia Suparti. Although he wanted to join the army, his father insisted that he become an artist. He majored in dance, but soon became very involved in composition as well. After graduating for the National Arts Institute (I.S.I.) in Yogyakarta, he joined the dance faculty there. His musical activities continue both on an off campus, including composing and teaching in his home village of Klaten. In 1982 he began experimenting with instruments other than those of the Javanese gamelan, making small instruments from bamboo and tuning them to the gamelan, using cowbells,, tin roofing sheets, making whistles from bamboo and coconut leaves. He also tried various vocal techniques, having singers sing into bamboo tubes or bronze pot-gongs. Borrows musical structure and rhythm from Jazz, Rock, western classical, African music and Indonesian popular music.

His experiments include building new instruments, transposing music techniques from Javanese gamelan to western instruments such as electronic keyboards, imposing strict limitations on pitch or instrumentation. He is working on a yet unrealized piece where all the music is made by devices attached to a dancer's body. Has toured to England in 1985 as a dancer and musician.\

EDUCATION

1986 graduated (bachelor level) from ISI (Insitute Seni Indonesia) a national arts institute in Yogyakarta.

TEACHING

since 1984 ISI Yogyakarta. courses taught: Javanese dance, classical Javanese music, music for dance accompaniment

COMPOSITIONS

for Javanese gamelan, found objects, fram tools, electronic instruments, original (made by the composer) instruments

Orak-Arik, Lesung 1981, Gobyog 1982, Kentongan, Patmo 1982, Tanggung 1984

Suwardi, Aloysius

born: 21 June 1951 in Sukoharjo, Central Java, Indonesia

1969 began studying Javanese and balinese music at Konservatori Karawiatan (high school conservatory) in Surakarta

1973 entered college level cons. ASKI in Surakarta, in the department of classical music

1974 became involved in experimental music with classmates at ASKI

19XX graduation from ASKI with a thesis on the building and playing of suling (vertical bamboo flute)

now faculty member at S.T.S.I. surakarta in the classical music department

has toured and taught in U.S. and europe, has had pieces played by many groups abroad as well

As a musician and composer, has particiapted in almost all of the important new music festivals in Inonesia in the last decade. Particularly known for the building of new instruments. He has earned tremendous respect as a player of tradtional gamelan music as well. In great demand, in Indonesia as well as the U.S. and Europe, to repair and retune the instruments of the Javanese gamelan. Claims to get many ideas for new sounds and new instruments while he is tuning gamelan instruments late into the night.

His instrument innovations include: placing the bronze keys of the gender on motor-driven resonators like a vibraphone, a giant sized gambnag (wooden xylophone) inspired by the log xylophones of Africa, a kind of water-suling, where the air goes through a tube and into a tin can of water before passing, modified, into the bamboo tube with finger holes.

COMPOSITIONS

Debah

Onde-onde

Saik

Gender 1984

Sebuah Process 1984

Ngalor-Ngidul (with Rustopo and Suparno) 1982

Sak-sake 1988

Syukur, Slamet Abdul

30 June 1935

Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia

Slamet Abdul Syukur is one of those Indonesian composers who was trained in Europe, returned to play an important and active part in Indonesian culture, and maintains active international connections. Active in education as well as performance and composition, he divides his time between his music school in Surabaya, where his father has a medical practice, and Jakarta, where he participates in the avant garde, urban artistic community.

A poem titled Belajar–Musik [Studying Music] begins [translated here from the original Indonesian by Jody Diamond, italics in original]:

Besides studying music to be able to *play music*
also study about how to *listen to music*.
just being able to play music
does not mean you understand music
it is just the same as saying words in a foreign language
without knowing what they mean.

EDUCATION

1944-52 private piano study

1952-56 Sekolah Musik Indonesia in Yogyakarta, Central Java

1962-63 Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris; studied organology with Chambure and analysis with O. Messiaen

1962-67 Ecole Normale de Musique de Paris. studied piano, chamber music, harmony, counterpoint, composition. Received in 1965 Licence d'Enseignement de Piano and, in 1967, Licence de Composition

[RETURN TO TOP](#)