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Department of Music, University of Richmond

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THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

GAMELAN RAGA KUSUMA
Hosts an evening of
South and Southeast Asian
Traditional Music and Dance

Dr. Andrew McGraw
Director

MONDAY, APRIL 7TH, 2008, 7:30 PM
CAMP CONCERT HALL
UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND
Program
[Approximately one hour, fifteen minutes]

Prasad Wai: The rare Thai pin pia is an ancient plucked lute, often called the "heart lute" in Northern Thailand where it was historically associated with courtship. It is an extremely quiet instrument (so that the intended audience needed to come nearer to hear it); the tones are modulated with a coconut shell resonator pressed against the breast. Although only found today in the area of the ancient Lanna kingdom in Northern Thailand, similar instruments were once played in Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Java and in India, where it is found in temple carvings dating to at least 2000 years ago. In Lanna-Thai "Prasad" refers to the human- (or elephant-) carried litter in which royalty or a young monk may ride. "Wai" refers to the gentle swaying of the carriage, heard in the wavering tones of the pia. (3 min.)

Wilujeng: Javanese gamelan likely predates Balinese ensembles; the instruments are structurally similar although, because of the heightened role of the voice in Javanese music beginning around 200 years ago, Javanese gamelan is much quieter, performed with padded mallets. Although the full Javanese gamelan is more than twice the size of the full Balinese gamelan (the large ensemble seen on stage), small "pick-up" versions of the ensemble, called gadhon, are often used for small, intimate events. The gadhon includes only the most essential instruments from the large ensemble: the singer (pesindhen), the slenthem, a metalophone which outlines the abstracted core melody, the gender, a larger metalophone which plays elaborate improvisations, the gong, which outlines the formal structure, the kendang drum, which directs the tempo, and the rebab fiddle which leads the melody. This piece is sometimes called Selamat, meaning safety, or peace, and is a common work used to welcome guests and insure a successful performance. (5 min.)

Rebong: There are roughly 25 different kinds of gamelan ensembles found in Bali, ranging from two to over 100 musicians. The gamelan gender wayang, which accompanies traditional performances of Balinese shadow theater, is the smallest ensemble and is generally recognized as the most technically complicated repertoire on the island. This is a relatively simple work used to accompany the love scenes in the Mahabharata play as performed in the village of Tunjuk. (4 min.)
Rejang: In Bali, the rejang is a class of traditional temple offering dance, performed to invite and please the gods and earthly guests to the temple ceremony. This version was adapted by National Conservatory from that performed in the tourist village of Kuta. (5 min.)

Raga Basant: North and South Indian ragas carry extra-musical associations; beyond conveying one of the nine rasa, or archetypal emotions, each raga is appropriate to a certain time of day, a certain season or may be performed in only certain contexts. Raga Basant is especially appropriate for this evening's performance because it is performed to welcome the spring. Ragas are highly structured improvisations, often including sections of set song as well, and performances of a single raga can last up to two hours. This evening's performance is considerably abbreviated. The Gandharva School of Music, led by Nirmal Bajekal. (7 min.)

Selisir, Gamelan Demonstration: The music of the Balinese gamelan is highly structured, following rules of orchestration and instrumentation not unlike those of the Western symphony orchestra. That the ensembles are community-based organizations is reflected in the communal nature of the musical structure and interdependence of musical lines. Gamelan is designed so that anyone can play it, but that no one can play it alone. Communal connection is heightened through the performance of the "waves" (ombak) of tuning, tempo and dynamics which constantly ripple through the music. Students of MUS230. (6 min.)

Topeng Tua: Balinese mask (topeng) dancing is performed for ceremonies at the temple and in the home. Topeng dancers usually perform historical and comic dialogues preceded by standard dances of certain "stock" characters including the keras (rough man), and tua (old man). The music for topeng tua reflects the more reserved, and refined nature of the old man, who reminisces on his youthful dancing in the middle (faster) section of the piece. (5 min.)

Continued
Sri Karongron: Javanese gamelan are performed for shadow theater performances, court ceremonies, social events and in casual performance groups. Sri Karongron may have been composed by a member of the Central Javanese royalty in the 19th century, to be performed as an instrumental work in the open-air pendopo of the Sultan’s palace. The work is a typical example of the “high classical” Central Javanese court style in which a melodic form is elaborated in several different rhythmic/density levels. (8 min.)

Lengker: Balinese seven-tone gamelan essentially disappeared in the beginning of the 20th century as the Dutch colonists melted down the ceremonial gamelan to form into canons and local gamelan clubs melted down their older seven-tone ensembles to refashion into the then (and now) popular gong kebyar five-tone gamelan. This rare work for the full-seven tone ensemble was probably composed in the 14th century to accompany the Gambuh dance drama. (7 min.)

Tarana / Kathak: Indian tarana songs are often short, repeated forms typically sung using syllables borrowed from Indian drumming languages. Kathak is an ancient Northern Indian dance form involving complex, fast footwork which is intricately connected to the accompanying drumming patterns. The word kathak comes from the Sanskrit katha, or story; Kathak is a partially narrative dance form which has been perfected in several different regional schools in India, although Persian-Mughal court influence is evident in each variety. The Gandharva School of Music, led by Nirmal Bajekal. Dancers: Manavi Johri and Shravani Vadvekar. (7 min.)

Suara Sandi / Jugalbandi: Suara Sandi was composed by I Nyoman Windha for his undergraduate recital in 1986. Windha has since become Bali’s leading composer. The work explores the interaction between two modes within in a single work and as such was experimental in the mid 1980s when seven-tone music was still a mostly forgotten relic of Bali’s past. Here we perform the work in collaboration with musicians from the Gandharva school borrowing the conversational Indian jugalbandi style. Jugalbandi, which means ‘entwined twins,’ involves the back-and forth between two solo musicians during the performance of a rag. Here, we expand the idea to involve the back and forth between the gamelan ensemble and the Indian musicians.
Kebyar Duduk: The origins of this seminal early Balinese kebyar work are not clearly known. The work likely emerged from interactions between the famous kebyar dancer Maria and the musicians around Bantiran village between Tabanan and Buleleng regencies in 1919. While dancing the social gandrung (in which young men often performed as transvestites) in Busungbiu village, Maria encountered a separate group of musicians rehearsing the dynamic new music of the Bantiran style (kebyar). Maria, uninvited, began freely improvising a new dance with this gamelan in a stooping and sitting (“duduk”) position, swirling and swaying, and occasionally actually playing the then out-of-fashion trompong instrument, in the gandrung costume he was wearing. (3 min.)

**End**

*Music and Dance of Indonesia and India*

'Gamelan' refers to the traditional orchestras found on the islands of Java and Bali within the Indonesian archipelago. The music typically accompanies theater and dance performance or serves as an acoustic offering within Balinese Hindu temple ceremonies. Above all, gamelan is about community. Ensembles are often owned by community organizations and performers are drawn from the community at large. Gamelan began to be studied in university and community settings within North America in the late 1950s. Today there are over 200 ensembles within America and Canada. The University of Richmond's gamelan was made by the renowned gong-smith Pande Sukerta who's team of craftsmen spent five months forging the instruments and carving the cases before the set was placed on a cargo ship for the three month journey to New York harbor.

Indian cultural influence was known in Bali by at least the seventh century A.D. where it combined with local religious, artistic and cultural practices. Many of the musical practices known in India today developed long after Indic culture first spread to East and Southeast Asia. The gamelan tradition has virtually nothing in common with contemporary music from South Asia, although the sanskritic Kawi language and poetic meters used by Balinese shadow puppeteers exhibit a close cultural connection to ancient Indian poetry.
**PERFORMERS**

**Gamelan Raga Kusuma**

**MUS230**
Keith Blackman, Laura Combs, Ari Corson, Will Cragin, Kelly Landers, Stephanie Langton, Stephanie Li, Ryan Manion, James Mazol, Emily Prior, Christopher Repas, Jessica Rosenthal, Rick Rueda, Tori Schwetz, Megan Sherrier, Jeffrey Strojney, Sandhya Talluri, Dominique Thomas, Michael Thomas, Timothy Webster.

**Javanese Gamelan Gadhon**

**Gandharva School of Music and Dance, Nirmal Bajekal, director**
Tabla by Bhushan Apte, Jatin Joshi.
Choreographer: Dr. Bharati Khopkar.
Dancers: Manavi Johri and Shravani Vadvekar.

**UPCOMING INDONESIAN PERFORMANCES**

**Saturday, May 3rd, 12 p.m.** Asian Cultural Festival, Richmond Convention Center. Join Raga Kusuma for a fun-filled afternoon of Asian culture, performances and food!

**PLAY GAMELAN!**

Spaces are open in Richmond’s own community-based Balinese gamelan ensemble Raga Kusuma. The large orchestra of hand-made gongs, chimes, drums, flutes and fiddles is designed to accommodate a wide range of musical abilities and interests. Beginners welcome, no previous musical experience necessary. Free and open to the public. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings from 7-9 PM in BB117 in Booker Hall, University of Richmond. UR students can study gamelan for credit in MSEN 230, times flexible, no prior musical experience necessary. For more information call 287-1807 or email amcgraw@richmond.edu.
GUEST ARTISTS

JOHN MACDONALD has been studying and performing Balinese and Javanese gamelan since the 1980s. He is a student of Nyoman Suadin.

CINDY BENTON-GRONER has studied Javanese gamelan for many years, both in the U.S. and in Indonesia. Her principal rebab teacher was the late Tjokro Wasitodipuro, one of the century’s preeminent musicians from Yogya­karta. She directs the Charlottesville Gamelan and the Indonesian Gamelan Ensembles at the College of William and Mary.

MURYANTO, born in Surakarta, Central Java, is a graduate of the Indonesian government Conservatory of Music and Dance and studied also at the Indonesian Academy of Dance in Yogyakarta. Following his training, he was a performing arts teacher and an official of the Department of Education and Culture in Pekalongan, Java. He has often appeared on Indonesian television in dance and musical performances. He now teaches dance, gamelan and puppetry at the Indonesian Embassy, where his specialties are the vocal arts of Java, Javanese and Sundanese drumming, and classical and modern Indonesian dance.

DIRECTORS

Andrew Clay McGraw is an assistant professor of music and ethnomusicology at the University of Richmond. He has studied traditional and experimental music in Bali and Java during several years of residence in Indonesia. He completed his Ph.D. on experimental music in Indonesia at Wesleyan University in 2005.

Nirmal Bajekal is the director of the Gandharva School of Music in Richmond, VA. The school is affiliated with the renowned Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva University in India. Nirmal has a masters degree in music and has extensive experience in teaching music at Lewis and Clark College and Reed College in Portland, OR. She is a gifted singer and has performed for various cultural organizations the world over. In Richmond, she has accompanied the legendary Pandit Ravi Shankar in UR’s Modlin Center performance.

THANK YOU to the University of Richmond music, dance, theater and religion departments, Office of International Education, Modlin Center for the Arts, Cultural Affairs Council, the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia and the Indonesian Institute of the Arts for their support in making these performances possible. Special thanks to Subha Sreedhar, Sulekha Jain and Bhushan Apte for their support.

Program notes by Andrew McGraw
Fall 2007—Spring 2008
Department of Music Free Events
Camp Concert Hall, unless otherwise noted

Anne Guthmiller, soprano
Dmitri Shteinberg, piano
Sunday, September 16—3p

Geoffrey Haydon, piano
Wednesday, September 19—7:30p

Family Weekend Concert
Friday, September 28—7:30p

Paul Hanson, piano
Sunday, September 30—3:00p

David Esleck Trio
Wednesday, October 3—7:30p

Balinese Wayang Kulit (Shadow Theater)
Gusti Putu Sudarta, Puppeteer
Sunday, October 7—3:00p
Cousins Studio Theater (Modlin)

Third Practice
Electroacoustic Music Festival
Friday, October 19 through
Saturday, October 20

Duo Piano Recital
Doris Wylee-Becker, piano
Richard Becker, piano
Sunday, November 4—3:00p

University Choir and Schola Cantorum
Sunday, November 11—3:00p

University Wind Ensemble
Sunday, November 18—7:30p

UR Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Combo
Monday, November 19—7:30p

Bruce Stevens, organ
Monday, November 26—7:30p
Cannon Memorial Chapel

Barry Salwen, piano
Wednesday, November 28—7:30p

Cuba Documentary Premiere and UR Jazz Combo: “Cuba: Rhythm in Motion”
Friday, November 30—7:30p

University Chamber Music Ensembles—
Monday, December 3—7:30p
University Orchestra
Wednesday, December 5—7:30p

University Balinese Gamelan & Dance
Thursday, December 6—7:30p

Annual Christmas Candlelight Concert
Sunday, December 9: 5 & 8:00p
Cannon Memorial Chapel

Spring 2008

Jeffrey Riehl, tenor
Kenneth Merrill, piano
Assisted by Jennifer Cable, soprano
Monday, January 14—7:30p

Richard Becker, piano
Sunday, February 3—3:00p

An Evening of Music by Béla Bartók
Matt Albert, violin
Matthew Duvall, percussion
Jennifer Cable, soprano
Paul Hanson, piano
Joanne Kong, piano
Ray Breakall, percussion
Monday, February 4—7:30p

Jeremy McEntire, flute
Sunday, February 24—3:00p

eighth blackbird
“The Only Moving Thing”
Wednesday, March 26—7:30p

Jazz and Brazilian Combo Concert
Wednesday, April 2—7:30p

University Choir & Schola Cantorum
Sunday, April 6—3:00p

University Balinese Gamelan and Dance
Monday, April 7—7:30p

University Orchestra
Wednesday, April 9—7:30p

UR Jazz Ensemble & Jazz Combo
Monday, April 14—7:30p

University Wind Ensemble
Wednesday, April 16—7:30p

University Chamber Music Ensembles
Monday, April 21—7:30p