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ESSAYS ON SOUTHEAST ASIAN PERFORMING ARTS:

## LOCAL MANIFESTATIONS AND CROSS-CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS

Kathy Foley, Editor



CENTERS FOR SOUTH AND SOUTHEAST ASIA STUDIES  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT BERKELEY

### MAKING CHOICES: AMERICAN *GAMELAN* IN COMPOSITION AND EDUCATION (FROM THE JAVA JIVE TO "EINE KLEINE GAMELAN MUSIC")

Jody Diamond

During this century, the *gamelan* orchestras of Java, Bali, and Sunda have increasingly appeared in both educational and artistic roles in the United States. Some similarities can be seen in the approaches of American educators and composers to the instruments and music of Indonesian traditions. A description of *gamelan* in higher education and a look at several compositions for *gamelan* by American composers will illustrate the range of choices made by those involved with *gamelan* in the New World—from emulating the Indonesian traditions to establishing a purely American one. The choices inherent in balancing tradition and innovation are also faced by educators and composers in many other countries, including Indonesia itself.

I write as both observer and participant, drawing examples from composers and teachers I have encountered as a *gamelan* musician, composer, and educator and as editor of *Balungan*, a journal of performing arts in Indonesia and their international counterparts. All *gamelan* programs and groups mentioned in this paper are listed in the appendix (that follows this text) and referred to in the paper only by the name of the institution or group. This is not intended to be a complete directory, but an annotated list of examples.\*

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\* A national (U.S.) directory of *gamelan* groups was published in *Balungan* 1, 1: 19–23.

## GAMELAN IN AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

The approach to gamelan in American higher education has varied from 1) "bi-musicality" and the replication of Indonesian traditions, through 2) development of artistic skill, to 3) encouraging cross-cultural creativity. These approaches have emerged through both historical and conceptual evolution and now exist simultaneously and in different combinations.

### 1) BI-MUSICALITY AND THE REPLICATION OF INDONESIAN TRADITIONS

Americans playing gamelan began in academic settings, where the goal of the performance course was to replicate the classical musics of Indonesia, and most teaching was done by Indonesian artists. At the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) in the 1950s, Mantle Hood encouraged bi-musicality, suggesting that students actually play the music of another culture as a way of understanding it. He brought the Javanese gamelan Kyai Mendung to UCLA in 1958 and invited Javanese artists such as K. R. T. Wasitodiningrat (formerly K. R. T. Wasitodipuro) and Hardja Susilo to be master teachers. Later a Balinese gamelan was added to the program. The ethnomusicology program at UCLA emphasized scholarly analysis and accurate reproduction of the Javanese and Balinese traditions, although it is interesting to note that Hood himself was composing for gamelan from the very early days of the program, and some of his students, like Gertrude Robinson, also composed contemporary works that involved gamelan.

The students who participated came from various fields: ethnomusicology, composition, percussion, anthropology, and other disciplines. Initially the goal was to gain a greater understanding of Indonesian practice, but as people were drawn into the experience of playing gamelan, other benefits emerged as well.

The opportunity for "hands-on" learning of gamelan made music-making accessible—classes were offered to those who had

no previous musical experience, as well as those who had training in Western or other musics. Other ethnomusicological performance experiences sometimes available at academic institutions (e.g., Japanese, Indian, Chinese, or Korean music) often required a high degree of instrumental virtuosity, whereas gamelan contained instruments with such a range of technical requirements that it was quite easy, initially, to actually make music. Gamelan was both musically satisfying and socially fulfilling, giving players a chance to belong to a group with a common interest and activity, and providing a pleasant alternative to musical experiences where long periods of individual lessons sometimes preceded the opportunity to play in a group. Perhaps it was the ease of access and social bonding, combined with fascinating performance traditions, that then, as now, produced students and community members with long-range commitment to the study and performance of gamelan music.

### 2) DEVELOPMENT OF ARTISTIC SKILL

Many of Hood's students continued to develop this intimate approach to ethnomusicology. As they took academic positions and initiated new programs, the development of artistic skill in addition to or even instead of scholarly understanding became a choice for new generations of gamelan players. A significant example is Robert E. Brown, who designed programs where Indonesian artists of the highest caliber taught students whose goals often included attaining a high level of performance skill in addition to gaining an understanding of the music.\* Some of the students went on to become serious performers, later choosing careers as scholars and/or artists and often becoming teachers of gamelan themselves, as I did.

An artistic level of performance was sometimes difficult to achieve in an academic setting, where the gamelan group mem-

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\*Some of these programs took place at Wesleyan University in the 1960s, at the California Institute of the Arts in the early 1970s, and at the Center for World Music, in Berkeley in the mid-1970s and now located in the San Diego area.

bership changes with each school year. This led to the establishment of several independent groups, such as Sekar Jaya, the Boston Village Gamelan, and Pusaka Sunda, whose commitment was to a very high quality of performance that attempted to be as close as possible to its origins in Balinese, Javanese, or Sundanese practice. Generally, these groups would study with Indonesian artists whenever possible.

### 3) CROSS-CULTURAL CREATIVITY

Americans themselves have also become teachers of gamelan, either because an Indonesian teacher was unavailable or due to a genuine interest in the teaching process. This sometimes resulted in dedicated gamelan players who had never studied with an Indonesian teacher but were extremely involved and committed to the study of Indonesian arts. There are musicians, composers, and students who are learning about Indonesian music and their new counterparts not from Javanese, Balinese, or Sundanese artists, but from Americans who have studied with Indonesian teachers and even Americans who have studied only with other Americans. This has happened, to my knowledge, at the Cornish Institute and Mills College, as well as in independent groups such as the Finestream Gamelan. There are also gamelan players in other countries, like Japan, England, and the Netherlands, who have learned primarily from members of their own culture.

Some American players of gamelan came to consider gamelan as an art form of their own culture, as well as of the individual areas of Indonesia whose music they have been taught, and became involved in compositions and instrument-building. Some of these artists have only tangential ties to Indonesia and see the gamelan as a vehicle for artistic expression, experimentation, and education. Joan Bell Cowan, for example, who studied gamelan at Mills College with both Lou Harrison and me, had built an entire ensemble, Gamelan Range of Light, and composed several pieces for it before she ever studied with an Indonesian teacher. She was using a gamelan to teach creative music and

Javanese music to hundreds of American schoolchildren before she took her first trip to Indonesia. While first-hand experience is optimum for being able to comprehend Javanese culture, there is artistic and educational merit in work like Ms. Cowan's, independent of its connection to Java.

Many gamelan groups began presenting programs that included works by American composers as well as pieces in the traditional Javanese repertoire. This has happened in groups taught by Americans, for example, at San Jose State University, the Cornish Institute of the Arts, Mills College, the University of California at Berkeley, the Peabody Music Institute, the University of Northern Illinois, the University of Michigan, and many others. Some gamelan groups emerged that are dedicated to playing *only* new music for gamelan: the Berkeley Gamelan and BANG, Gamelan Pacifica, Gamelan Son of Lion, and Gamelan Encantada. There have also been Javanese artists who worked extensively with American gamelan groups playing new music: Widiyanto S. Putro has often collaborated with Lou Harrison and Vincent McDermott, and Sumarsam has participated in pieces by John Cage. Many of these groups also perform pieces by Indonesian composers such as K. R. T. Wasitodiningrat, R. N. Martopangrawit, I Wayan Sadra, B. Subono, and Slamet Syukur.

These approaches to gamelan—replication, artistic comprehension, and creative development—have shaped the experience of gamelan in higher education. Educational styles—from the strictly academic to the openly artistic—continue to evolve. American compositions for gamelan, seen in relation to this continuum, show the variations in aesthetics, training, and inclination of individual composers, many of whom were at some time involved in the gamelan programs at the university level.

### AMERICAN GAMELAN COMPOSERS: MAKING CHOICES

Musical innovation in gamelan has taken place in various realms: instrument-building, composition, and education. Additionally, original dance, theater, and puppet performances have

been inspired by contact with gamelan and other Indonesian performing arts. The new instruments, music, and other arts have a variety of relationships to the Indonesian forms that inspired them.

There are some gamelan programs in which both traditional Javanese and new music are taught and performed on gamelan instruments that were designed and built in the United States, such as at Mills College, the Cornish Institute of the Arts, Sonoma State College, and North Texas State University. Composition for gamelan by non-Indonesian artists is not limited to the United States. The group Dharma Budhaya plays primarily gamelan music by Japanese composers. In Canada, the Evergreen Club plays almost entirely contemporary works by international composers. In the Netherlands, the group Stichting Symbiosis specializes in new music for Javanese gamelan instruments. There are many other examples.

Many who have studied Indonesian musical traditions and then encountered the "new gamelan" have asked the following: Since the Indonesian traditions are so rich and complex, deserving of a lifetime of study, why should anyone try to make new music that could not possibly be as interesting? I am sympathetic to this question. I was a student of traditional Javanese and Balinese music for eleven years before beginning to compose for gamelan. I think that wanting to compose for gamelan is not a matter of lack of respect for the Indonesian traditions, but of coming to terms with a basic human ability, talent, and need: to be creative with whatever knowledge we have.

In American composition for gamelan, as in education, many different paths have been developed and chosen. The musical examples presented here demonstrate how the composers have varied from or added to the Indonesian musical concepts to which they were originally exposed.\* All the composers have used certain musical elements that they considered characteristic of gam-

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\*When this paper was given, taped examples were played of each piece, giving an immediate and more complete sense of the pieces than words and notation can do here. The tape of examples is on file in the American Gamelan Institute Archives.

elan (e.g., texture, tuning, playing technique, formal structure). All of them have been exposed to some kind of Indonesian ensemble, although their expertise in Indonesian repertoires is varied. Each has formed a different notion about the "essence" of gamelan and of the way this relates to his or her creative endeavors.

The link between these examples and gamelan as it exists in Bali, Java, or other areas of Indonesia might be conceived along a continuum from the obvious to the abstract, beginning with a piece so traditionally constructed that it has been accepted into the repertoire of a Balinese group, and ending with works that are almost deliberately nonreferential to Indonesia. These pieces might be seen as demonstrating a range of relationships to the Indonesian traditions: 1) emulating, 2) translating, 3) embellishing, 4) modifying, 5) acknowledging, and 6) bypassing.

The choices that a composer makes in creating a piece for gamelan will, by virtue of the artist's background, be a hybrid of Indonesian and American musical ideas. The following examples represent categories of possible creative responses to gamelan and show some of the variety of approaches to composition for gamelan that I have observed during the last decade. Of course these are not all the possible compositional approaches to gamelan. Nor are the relationships represented necessarily the sole approach of the composers mentioned here—the concepts have been generalized for the purpose of this discussion, and one composer might choose one or a combination of these approaches for any piece.

#### 1) EMULATING THE TRADITION

In this case the composer tries as much as possible to employ the musical practices of the Indonesian tradition with which he or she is most familiar, employing aspects of musical structure, orchestration, elaboration, etc. that have been learned through contact with a particular Indonesian area, often (but not exclusively) through lessons with a teacher from Java, Bali, or Sunda on instruments native to the area.

Michael Tenzer co-composed *Semara Yanti* with his teachers Tembres and Suweca in 1982. As an undergraduate at Yale, and later as a graduate student in composition at U.C. Berkeley (where he completed his Ph.D.), Tenzer spent several years of study in Bali. In this piece, he followed the forms of his Balinese teachers as closely as possible, using the instruments and the treatment of standard Balinese practice. He cautiously used new elements so as not to upset the overall aesthetic of the Balinese music as he understood it. *Semara Yanti* was written in Bali for the gamelan in the village of Lodtunduh and is still performed by that group as an overture for performances at temple festivals and other occasions. Perhaps it is a measure of its closeness to traditional practice that there is no notation to give here as an example!

## 2) INTERPRETING THE TRADITION

Some composers with extensive experience in an Indonesian tradition will attempt to make elements of that tradition more obvious to a Western audience, serving as a kind of artistic translator. Perhaps these composers feel that an untrained audience is not capable of fully appreciating the complexity of gamelan music on first hearing. Familiar elements such as a text (like Alec Roth's use of Shakespeare) or melody may give the Western listener a point of reference: when the listener focuses on a familiar element, it is possible that its relationship to musical structures and embellishments in which it is set may become more apparent. This might result in increased appreciation for a particular Indonesian tradition and a deeper, more familiar experience of aesthetic appreciation for the music at hand.

*In That Bright World* (Diamond 1984), which I composed in 1981, uses Javanese and Balinese forms and treatments to convey a traditional Javanese texture and feeling, but employs an American song, *Poor Wayfaring Stranger*, as both the basis of the underlying melody and the vocal melody sung by female soloist and male chorus (see Example 1). This was an effort to give the American listener a hint of what the Javanese might hear when they listen to gamelan and an attempt to understand what the Javanese

call *lagu*, the "inner melody"—that is, a melodic construct that is not expressly stated by any one instrument but referred to, interpreted, and followed internally by the players and the listeners. My intention, educational in nature as well as artistic, was to create for the American audience the experience of listening to a piece of gamelan music and intuitively understanding, by virtue of familiarity with the underlying melody, the organization and form of the piece. My knowledge of Javanese forms was the result of my studies of the traditional music of Java and Bali, primarily with K. R. T. Wasitodiningrat, beginning at the California Institute of the Arts in 1970.

## 3) EMBELLISHING THE TRADITION

In Example 1, an American melody was arranged to fit Javanese musical structure, tuning, and setting. It is also possible to combine Western (or Chinese, as in Jarrad Powell's *Gending Erhu* (for Javanese style gamelan and erhu [Powell 1987]) and Indonesian elements without altering the former to make it appear as if it were part of the latter. This can result in a meeting of styles, a kind of dialogue or partnership between two musical practices, where the Indonesian practice is embellished by the addition of musical ideas or elements from other traditions.

*Main Bersama-sama*, by Lou Harrison (Example 2), uses traditional Sundanese forms and texture as a setting for the composer's own melody. Long influenced by Asian music, Harrison has had direct instruction in the musics of China, Korea, and various areas of Indonesia, and is also responsible, with William Colvig, for building one of the largest Javanese-style American gamelan in this country, the Gamelan Si Darius/Si Madeleine at Mills College. The instrumentation for *Main Bersama-sama* is a Sundanese *gamelan degung*, with the addition of a French horn. While all of the gamelan instruments are played traditionally in terms of technique and textural density, the creation of a new melody and the use of a French horn (a part that has also been played by a saxophone) make this piece as much American as Sundanese, particularly since the French horn melody is very

## Example 1

## In That Bright World

Jody Diamond

## Vocal part, cipher notation

Section C, Irama II, male chorus (*gerong*) and female soloist (*pesindhen*)

Balungan	3	3	5	6	5	3	2	3)									
Gerong	3	3	5	6	-	-	-	5	6	5	3	2	1	2	3		
	I'm	go	-	in'	there			to	see	my	fa	-			ther		
Pesindhen				i	7*	5	6	-	-	.56-	.5	3	2	1	2	3	
				I'm	go	-	in'	there		to	see	my	fa	-		ther	
Balungan	i	6	5	6	3	3	5	3)									
Gerong I	3	i	7	6	-	-	-	-	5	3	2	3	5	6	5	3	
Gerong II	3	3	5	6	-	-	-	-	5	3	2	3	5	6	5	3	
	I'm	go	-	in'	there			no	more	to	roam						
Pesindhen				i	7	5	6	-	-	-	.53--	5	6	5	3	2	3
				I'm	go	-	in'	there		no	more	to	roam				
Balungan	i	6	5	3	2	1	2	1)									
Gerong I	3	6	5	3	-	-	-	-	212	3	1	2	1	7	6		
Gerong II	6	6	1	3	-	-	-	-	212	3	1	2	1	7	6		
	I'm	just	a	go	-				in'	o-	ver	Jor-			dan		
Pesindhen				3	2	i	7	i	-	.7	i	7	6	5	3		
				I'm	just	a	go	-		in',	go	-	in'	o-	ver	home	
Balungan	3	2	1	2	3	2	1	(6)									
Gerong	6	6	3	2	-	-	-	-	3	2	1	2	1	6	5	6	
	I'm	just	a	go	-				I'm	just	a	go	-	in'	o-	ver	home
Pesindhen				2	2	3	5	2	3	5	6	i	22	i	6	(return to	
				2	2	3	5	2	3	5	6	5	22	1	6	(continue	
				I'm	just	a	go	-	in'	o-	ver,	go	-	in'	o-	ver	home

\* pitch 7 is approximately halfway between slendro 6 and i

much in Harrison's own well-developed style. By adding to, or embellishing upon, his knowledge of the tradition, Harrison has created music that may be similar to the Sundanese in form or treatment, but in melody, mode, and feeling is his (and our) own.

## 4) MODIFYING THE TRADITION

It is possible to draw inspiration from Indonesian traditions without attempting to duplicate them. The inspiration that a composer derives from playing in a gamelan or from hearing gamelan music may result in the creation of music or instruments that, though they may bear some resemblance to Javanese, Balinese, or Sundanese models, are not directly imitative.

Daniel Schmidt is a composer and instrument-builder whose work has been the impetus for the building of beautiful and innovative American gamelan instruments. He was already a composer when he began studying Javanese gamelan at the California Institute of the Arts in 1970 with K. R. T. Wasitodiningrat. He calls his instruments "composition-inspired" because his compositional ideas in tuning and timbre necessitated the building of original instruments. He now directs the Berkeley Gamelan, an independent ensemble that uses his own instruments and specializes in new music for gamelan. Schmidt has also taught Javanese music at Sonoma State University. In *Ghosts*, as in most of his works, he does not imitate the Javanese forms that he studied but draws on concepts from his Western training in composition and uses the particular sounds and capabilities of his instruments. Specially constructed instruments of heavy aluminum tubes play interlocking parts known in Central Java as *imbal*, while leaving certain notes undamped that continue to resonate and form an independent melody; these undamped tones are indicated in the score by outlined numbers (Example 3). By modifying the traditional music and instruments of Java and creating new ones, Schmidt has been able to realize his own musical visions.

## Example 2

Main Bersama-sama (Playing together)  
For Sundanese Gamelan Degung and French Horn

Lou Harrison

Handwritten musical score for Sundanese Gamelan Degung and French Horn. The score is written on ten staves, with the first five staves for the Gamelan instruments and the last five for the French Horn. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 60$  and the time signature is 5/4. The instruments listed on the left are: Suling/French Horn, Saron, Pajerus, Bonang, Rindik, Gambang, Kendang, and Zenglong (Kendang). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Handwritten musical score for Sundanese Gamelan Degung and French Horn. The score is written on ten staves, with the first five staves for the Gamelan instruments and the last five for the French Horn. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 60$  and the time signature is 5/4. The instruments listed on the left are: Suling/French Horn, Saron, Pajerus, Bonang, Rindik, Gambang, Kendang, and Zenglong (Kendang). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

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Handwritten musical score for Sundanese Gamelan Degung and French Horn. The score is written on ten staves, with the first five staves for the Gamelan instruments and the last five for the French Horn. The tempo is marked  $\text{♩} = 60$  and the time signature is 5/4. The instruments listed on the left are: Suling/French Horn, Saron, Pajerus, Bonang, Rindik, Gambang, Kendang, and Zenglong (Kendang). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

### Example 3

#### Ghosts

Daniel Schmidt

⑦

77	5555	1155	3336	5522	5115	5012	3302	1133
PT	6666	2666	5551	3131	3333	3333	2210	2022
	<i>simile</i>							
ST	5555	1155	3333	6522	5522	5012	3302	1133
	6666	2666	0555	5131	3313	3333	2210	2022
	<i>simile</i>							
DT	5555	1155	3332	0352	3365	5555	3333	3333
	6666	2666	5551	5131	1513	3333	2222	2222
	<i>simile</i>							
SL		5 6	.35	6 5	. 6	5 3	.53	.22
	<i>mp cresc. poco a poco</i>							
K								2
G								2

  

81	6611	3311	3301	0502	1513	6631	5521	0132
PT	2262	2262	5512	3351	3325	1523	3033	5513
ST	2233	1163	3301	0502	5155	6251	5521	0132
	6622	6252	5512	3351	3333	5366	3033	5513
DT	6653	5551	1522	2202	5555	2255	5521	0132
	2262	6662	6311	1351	3313	1363	3033	5513
SL	. 6	1 2	. .	3 1	.61	2 3	. 5	.33
K				1				3
G				1				3

  

85	6611	3311	3125	5522	6115	225	1202	1133
PT	2262	2262	5013	3151	3333	1333	6110	2020
ST	2233	1163	3122	0522	5522	555	1202	1133
	6622	6252	5011	5151	3313	1333	6110	2020
DT	6653	5551	1662	0352	3365	5515	2222	2233
	2262	6662	5511	5151	2513	3663	6666	6020
SL		5 3 2	. 3	2 1	5 6	5 3	2 3	5 6
	<i>cresc.</i>							
K		2						6
G						3		6

GONG

### 5) ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRADITION

A composer may spend time learning the music of Java, Bali, or Sunda and then create pieces that, while not imitating Indonesian musics directly, use musical elements or instruments that show awareness of the Indonesian source. The musical concepts that a composer is able to perceive, no matter how limited the time of study, may well appear in future works, whether for gamelan or Western instruments. There is not an attempt to create music that might pass for an Indonesian regional style, but there is an undeniable recognition of certain musical elements and compositional techniques that may appear in a variety of cultural contexts.

Jeff Morris is a composer who has had American rather than Indonesian gamelan teachers. Most of his experience has been playing new music on American-built gamelan. His teachers have been Paul Drescher, Lou Harrison, and Terry Riley; he came as a graduate student to Mills College, where Lou Harrison had established a tradition of composing for gamelan and I was serving as an instructor of Javanese instrumental techniques. In *Extractions*, Morris employs textural qualities that bear a greater similarity to minimalist conventions than Indonesian practice (Example 4). Yet he also makes extensive use of the interlocking melodies formed by Javanese imbal, and uses repeated sections that are reminiscent of Javanese gong phrases. He acknowledges his awareness of the Indonesian tradition by using this technique, but the formal organization of the piece is in the Western "new music" tradition.

### 6) BYPASSING THE TRADITION

Some compose for gamelan as a set of "found instruments"—sound-making tools independent of cultural custom or style. These composers have different reasons for "ignoring" the Indonesian background of the instruments. Some do it out of a respect for the complexity of the Indonesian musics they have heard: to imitate would require simplification. Some are not look-



## Example 4

## Extractions

Jeff Morris

## SECTION 2

BONANG	6...i...i.	..3...3...	i...i...2.	..2...6...	6...i...i.	..3...3...
PEK I	6 11 1 1	33 3 3 1	1 1 1 22	2 2 66 6	6 11 1 1	33 3 3 1
PEK II	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.
SAR I	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3
SAR II	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1
DEM I	.1.3.2.5.5	.3.6.2.1.6	.1.3.2.5.5	.3.6.2.1.6	.1.3.2.5.5	.3.6.2.1.6
DEM II	6 1 6 1 6	1 6 1 3 5	6 3 5 6 3	5 6 3 5 6	6 1 6 1 6	1 6 1 3 5
SLEN	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -
KEMPUL	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2
GONG	6 - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -	- - - - -

BONANG	i...i...2.	..2...6...	6...i...i.	..3...3...	i...i...2.	..2...6...
PEK I	1 1 1 22	2 2 66 6	6 11 1 1	33 3 3 1	1 1 1 22	2 2 66 6
PEK II	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.
SAR I	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3
SAR II	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1
DEM I	.1.3.2.5.5	.3.6.2.1.6	.1.3.2.5.5	.3.6.2.1.6	.1.3.2.5.5	.3.6.2.1.6
DEM II	6 3 5 6 3	5 6 3 5 6	6 1 6 1 6	1 6 1 3 5	6 3 5 6 3	5 6 3 5 6
SLEN	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -
KEMPUL	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2
GONG	. . 1 . .	. 2 . . .	6 . . . 1	. . . 3 .	. . 1 . .	. 2 . . .

BONANG	6...i...i.	..3...3...	i...i...2.	..2...6...
PEK I	6 11 1 1	33 3 3 1	1 1 1 22	2 2 66 6
PEK II	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.	2.3.3.5.6.
SAR I	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3	.5.6.2.3.3
SAR II	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1	6 2 1 3 1
DEM I	.1.3.2.5.5	.1.3.2.5.5	.1.3.2.5.5	.1.3.2.5.5
DEM II	6 1 6 1 6	1 6 1 3 5	6 3 5 6 3	5 6 3 5 6
SLEN	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -	6 - 6 - 6	- 6 - 6 -
KEMPUL	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2	2 2 2 2 2
GONG	6 . . . 1	. . . 3 .	. . 1 . .	. 2 . . .

## FOUR TIMES

1st time- pekings  
and sar. II tacit.  
2nd time- add  
sar. II.  
3rd time- add pekings;  
sar. II tacit.  
4th time- add  
sar. II, all parts.

ing for cross-cultural inspiration, but for a new environment in which to express their own ideas. Others feel that being influenced by Indonesian musics might have a dangerous effect on their work, evidenced in Philip Corner's statement that "It wasn't safe for me as a creator to know too much about the Indonesian tradition until I had created a body of work [not] imitative [or] derivative" (Diamond 1986: 31). These pieces are considered gamelan music because they use instruments from an area of Indonesia, or instruments built elsewhere in an Indonesian style, or a combination of Indonesian and Western instruments, like Daniel Goode's *Eine Kleine Gamelan Music* (1983). Artistically, however, they may be more a part of the composer's development within his or her own tradition than evidence of cross-cultural influence.

In Richard Felciano's *In Celebration of Golden Rain* for Central Javanese gamelan and organ (1992), the composer bypasses the problem of understanding the foreign tradition, treating the gamelan somewhat as percussion instruments with an unusual tuning. The score, in Western notation, describes the playing techniques in terms that would be more familiar to a Western-trained percussionist than a Javanese-trained gamelan player (Example 5). Admitting his lack of experience in the Javanese tradition, Felciano did not try to imitate Javanese musical form or technique but designed the piece as a dialogue between the Western organ and the Javanese ensemble so that the organ acts as a kind of "host" for its honored guest but does not pretend to speak its language.

## EDUCATION AND COMPOSITION: A COMPARISON

The approaches to gamelan at American universities often set the backdrop for the new composers and their works. Those who have had the deepest experience of Indonesian culture by living and extensively studying there (or here with Indonesian artists) use or refer to Indonesian traditions most heavily in their compositions. Those who have less direct experience of gamelan, or are intentionally avoiding cross-cultural influence, have ap-

[illegible]

proached the instruments more freely, relying on their own background rather than Indonesian musical resources.

Compositional styles bear similarities to educational approaches. Michael Tenzer's *Semara Yanti* is an example of close replication of the Indonesian tradition. My own piece relies on an artistic use of both Javanese and American sources. Richard Felciano's *In Celebration of Golden Rain*, and other more experimental pieces, carry the cross-fertilization process to further extremes.

All of these examples constitute more of a description of possibilities than a categorical analysis. There are many other composers and teachers who may not use the approaches described above. For example, the *Gamelan Series* of Philip Corner (1986) is a set of over four hundred pieces based on different number relationships playable on a wide range of instruments, including (but not at all limited to) gamelan. And there is a growing repertoire for gamelan combined with other instruments and with electronics, such as the pieces composed for the Evergreen Club. Just change "American" in this article to "North American," "non-Indonesian," or "international" to include some of the Canadian, European, Japanese, Australian, and New Zealand composers who are also creating new music for gamelan. Some of these pieces might be considered "informed by an Indonesian tradition," but others are tied more closely to trends in the composer's own music and culture.

Perhaps all of these pieces are contributing to the creation of a new tradition: international gamelan music that is created and identified across cultural boundaries. As a participant in creating this new international genre of music and as someone committed to documenting and observing it, I find in its evolution an ongoing attempt to answer the difficult and fascinating questions concerning cross-cultural influence in composition.

## THE INDONESIAN CASE

Americans are not the only ones engaged in the inevitable evolution of gamelan music. The topic of contemporary music in Indonesia is of increasing interest to both artists and scholars

(Rustopo 1988; Sadra 1991; Diamond 1990a-b; Roth 1986; Hood 1988; Durkee 1986).

Indonesian composers, musicians, and educators are making choices about musical development and innovation. At S.T.S.I. Surakarta and A.S.K.I. Padang Panjang, national Indonesian arts colleges, it was at one time a requirement that every student compose a new piece of music in order to graduate. There is an annual competition in Bali that invites new compositions in a wide variety of styles. The Jakarta Arts Council has hosted major festivals showcasing the work of young and innovative composers and choreographers, particularly the Pekan Komponis Muda (Young Composer's Festival), held annually since 1979 (Harjana 1986). There are many composers throughout Indonesia whose work shows evidence of new directions—Ben Pasaribu's piece for gamelan, fretless bass, and trap drums (1985), the new instrument designs of A. L. Suwardi, the multi-tradition references of Nyoman Windha, the experimental multi-media theater pieces of Wayan Sadra. Perhaps these pieces too might fit into a continuum ranging from close replication of existing practice to deliberate experimentation and radical change.

There are, however, some differences between the Indonesian and the American gamelan composer. The Javanese or Balinese composer in most cases is already master of a tradition; he or she is not experimenting and learning at the same time, as many non-Indonesian composers are, especially those who discover gamelan in an educational setting. It might be said that the Indonesian composer does not have to worry about communicating cross-culturally, unless (considering that the many Indonesian islands contain more cultural diversity than many other nations) a piece is presented to a national rather than regional audience. In one sense, the Javanese or Balinese composer does not have to educate or train his audience as the Western gamelan composer must: listeners are already familiar with the instruments and the sounds of the gamelan and have seen it in many settings. Even so, it may be that the farther a composer strays from the widely known tradition, the more difficult it is to gain an audience—but perhaps that is a universal problem for contemporary music!

## CONCLUSION

The acquisition of musical knowledge is accompanied by choices, regardless of the tradition's origin. Music can be preserved, developed, imitated, used as the basis for other kinds of music, expanded, and exploited. One can approach musical knowledge as a scholar, a composer, a player, an instrument-builder, a critic, and an audience member.

We can be teachers of the old and inventors of the new. Perhaps those who participate in a tradition's evolution have the most need of its preservation. It is in this spirit that international gamelan composers depend on both the knowledge of musicologists and the master musicians who have gone before them. By intimately understanding the precedents, we can truly progress. We show respect for a tradition by the very act of experimenting with it. Care must be taken not to let the profound weight of history become the burdensome weight of history. History and tradition are the servants of art, not vice versa.

By examining the development of gamelan in education and composition and understanding the music created by these composers, we gain a greater understanding of areas that are important to us as observers of music in human culture. Within our own culture's compositions for gamelan is information about how we perceive music from another tradition, what we learn, and how the concepts we obtain are reflected in our own music. By examining the phenomenon of new gamelan music from an international perspective, we can gain insight into the direction and the effects of creativity in an increasingly cross-cultural musical world.

## APPENDIX

### *Gamelan Groups and Programs Mentioned in This Paper*

BANG (Bay Area New Gamelan) in Northern California. Formed to play at New Music America in Los Angeles in 1985, it was initially directed by Daniel Schmidt and Jody Diamond, later by Diamond. Played new music and traditional styles of Central Java and Bali.

Berkeley Gamelan. Directed by Daniel Schmidt since the mid-1970s. The instruments were designed, tuned, and built by Schmidt of brass and aluminum; repertoire is contemporary.

California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, California; K. R. T. Wasitodiningrat, director. Central Javanese music and dance repertoire. The program was started by Robert E. Brown in 1970. A Balinese Semar Pegulingan was later added.

Center for World Music and San Diego State University, La Jolla, California. Both programs directed by Robert E. Brown, with many guest teachers from Indonesia, such as Rahayu Supanggah, Made Lesmawan, and Rizaldi Siagian. Repertoire is traditional Indonesian regional styles; many sets of instruments are included.

Cornish Institute of the Arts (Gamelan Pacifica), Seattle, Washington. Currently directed by Jarrad Powell, using an aluminum gamelan built originally by Daniel Schmidt and later modified by Paul Drescher, Kent Devereaux, and others. Gamelan Pacifica is also an independent group that plays an iron and brass gamelan built by Suhirjan of Yogyakarta. Repertoire is new music by international composers and some traditional music in the styles of Central Java and Bali.

Dharma Budhaya, directed by Shin Nakagawa at Kyoto City University of the Arts in Japan. Repertoire is mostly contemporary music for Central Javanese gamelan by Japanese composers.

Evergreen Club, Toronto, Canada. Founded by Jon Siddal and now directed by Andrew Timar. Instruments are a Sundanese gamelan *degung* with added *gambang*; repertoire is mostly new works by international composers.

Finestream Gamelan, Tucson, Arizona. Built and directed by Matt Finstrom. Repertoire includes music of Central Java, Bali, and Banyumas.

Gamelan Encantada, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Instruments built by Barbara Benary, group taught and directed by Jeanette De Bouzek. Repertoire is mostly new music.

Gamelan Range of Light, Vallejo, California. An aluminum gamelan in Central Javanese style, built by Joan Bell Cowan. Repertoire is American and Javanese pieces; instruments are primarily used for elementary education.

Gamelan Sekar Jaya, El Cerrito, California. Founded by Michael Tenzer, Rachel Cooper, and Wayan Suweca; current instruments are owned by Rachel Cooper and run by a committee of players. Repertoire is Balinese *gong kebyar*; *angklung* is also played. New pieces have been composed by visiting Indonesian teachers like Ketut Partha and Nyoman Windha.

Gamelan Son of Lion, New York City. Instruments built by Barbara Benary in early 1970s; group directed by Benary with assistance from member composers like Philip Corner and Daniel Goode. Repertoire is exclusively new music by American, Indonesian, and other composers.

Mills College, Oakland, California. Gamelan Si Darius/Si Madeleine, one of the largest American gamelans, built in 1980 by Lou Harrison, William Colvig, and Mills students. Director was initially Lou Harrison, then Jody Diamond until 1990. Repertoire included traditional and contemporary music from Java, Bali, and America.

North Texas State University, Denton, Texas. Directed by Robert Schietroma and Steven Friedman. An aluminum gamelan designed and built by Daniel Schmidt; repertoire is traditional music from Central Java and contemporary American pieces.

Peabody Music Institute, Baltimore, Maryland. Directed by Robert Macht. Instruments are from Central Java; repertoire includes new music by Macht and other American composers.

Pusaka Sunda, San Jose, California. Founded and directed by Burhan Sukarma with Rae Ann Stahl. Repertoire is Sundanese *degung* and other styles.

San Jose State University, San Jose, California. Program initially directed by Lou Harrison, then Trish Neilsen. Gamelan is Si Betty, a large aluminum American gamelan built on Central Javanese models by Harrison and William Colvig. Repertoire includes traditional music from Central Java and contemporary works from the United States.

Sonoma State University, Cotati, California. Directed by Daniel Schmidt, instruments designed and built by Schmidt from brass. Repertoire is Javanese and American.

Stichting Symbiosis, Utrecht, the Netherlands. Directed by Jurrien Sligter, the group specializes in new music for Javanese gamelan instruments.

University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Gamelan Kyai Mendung from Central Java; program initially directed by Mantle Hood. Repertoire is mostly traditional music of Central Java, with recent programs of contemporary music by American composers.

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Program directed initially by Judith Becker. Repertoire of traditional music for Central Javanese gamelan, with some programs of contemporary music by American and Javanese composers.

University of Northern Illinois at De Kalb. Directed by H.K. Han. Instruments include a Central Javanese gamelan of iron and brass and a Balinese gamelan *angklung*; repertoire is based on traditional Indonesian styles, with some new music also performed.

Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut. Directed currently by Sumarsam, with I. M. Harjito. Repertoire is traditional Central Javanese, although the instruments have been used by graduate and guest composers such as Ben Pasaribu and John Cage.

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Many of the scores, books, and recordings mentioned in this article—including scores of most of the examples—are available through the Archives of the American Gamelan Institute, Box A-36, Hanover NH 03755.