ČUDAMANI:
GAMELAN and DANCE OF BALI

TIRTA-WATER

Wednesday, September 22, 2021 | 7:30pm
Alice Jepson Theatre

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THE PROGRAM

Dewa Putu Berata, artistic director
Emiko Saraswati Susilo, associate director
I Dewa Putu Rai, music director

Produced by The Foundation for World Arts

Musicians and Dancers

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Co-sponsored by University of Richmond’s Asia Connect and Department of Music in partnership with the community ensemble Gamelan Raga Kusuma.

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Rangrang
The word rangrang refers to that which is intertwined or knit together, just as we are interwoven with one another and the universe around us. The piece is inspired by the belief that each sound, each note has a sacred resonance, each pattern an intrinsic beauty. Balinese gamelan often starts with a section called a peng-rangrang, a flowing abstraction of the core melody. This benang merah or ‘red thread’ weaves through the fabric of the whole composition. In the spirit of rangrang we offer this piece as a musical connection to the great master composers who have come before us and those who will follow.

Composer: I Dewa Putu Rai

Welcome by Emiko Saraswati Susilo

Legong Swatika
A creative development in the legong tradition, Legong Swatika tells the story of disaster and resolution. Peace is disturbed when a wild boar destroys the mystical garden of Dewi Danu, the Lake Goddess. In her anger, the goddess kills the boar. The farmers throw its body and the waste from the garden into the ocean. The God of the Ocean, Baruna, is outraged by their act of pollution. In his fury he curses the farmers with pestilence. In their suffering the farmers ask forgiveness and vow to take better care of the Earth, Baruna agrees, and the world returns to balance-SWATIKA.

Composer: I Putu Swaryandana Ichi Oka  Choreographer: Dewa Ayu Eka Putri

Dancers: Dewa Ayu Eka Putri, Dewa Ayu Swandewi, Desak Nyoman Sri Suyasning Putri, Desak Ketut Safitri Dewi, I Putu Wibi Wicaksana

Batel Gambangan
Batel is a special configuration of Balinese gamelan instruments and often accompanies Wayang Kulit (shadow puppets) or Wayang Wong- as you will see tonight. The batel ensemble offers musicians great flexibility as they build refined yet complex rhythms and move from one melody to another. Interaction between musicians is one of the most engaging aspects of batel. The playful musical conversation between the two drummers- is lively and impressive.

Arrangement: I Dewa Putu Berata
Wayang Wong Dance - Sethu Banda - the Bridge to Lanka

Wayang Wong is a unique genre of masked dance theater in Bali. The masks depict the many creatures of the forest and are accompanied by the Batel music ensemble. We present the moment in the epic Ramayana when Rama's Wanara army, comprised of monkeys and other creatures of the forest, sets out to build a bridge to Lanka so that Rama can rescue his wife Sita from the powerful king Ravana. Sugriwa wants two members of the army to show their strength — the tiger monkey, Sempati, and the deer monkey, Umenda. They are soon off to their mission to look for huge boulders at the bottom of the ocean. They are confused when their bridge keeps collapsing. The goddess of the sea does not want them to disturb her abode. Hanuman explains their mission to the goddess and she not only agrees but supports their mission.

Choreographer: Ida Bagus Putu Eka Wirawan

Music Direction: I Made Yogisatya Satwika and I Dewa Putu Berata


INTERMISSION

Ambah - the Sound of Water

This new work evokes the power of water, from its gentle life giving beauty to its destructive force. The gamelan creates the sounds of rain, river and water churning in the ocean.

Composers: I Dewa Putu Rai and I Dewa Putu Berata

Petani - Water for life

Water is, of course, essential to life. The subak is the system used by Balinese farmers to manage water and planting. Farmers work intimately with water every day, managing the flow of water into the fields, ensuring that each farmer receives sufficient water and that Dewi Sri, the Goddess of Rice, is honored. As the rice fields are sacred spaces, all actions and thoughts in the fields must be positive, and the spirit of hard work and collaboration infused with joy.

Arrangement: I Dewa Putu Berata
TIRTA- Sacred Water

Four dancers symbolize water as sacred pure energy. In Bali the most sacred springs are honored by important temples. Tirta (sacred water) is the way that the gods purify, heal, bless, and sustain all things in nature, including humans. In this dance a priest collects Tirta and uses it as he blesses all things of this world.

Composer: I Dewa Putu Rai
Choreographer: Dewa Ayu Eka Putri

Teruna Jaya

One of the hallmarks of Bali’s virtuosic kebyar tradition, Teruna Jaya is one Çudamani’s most beloved repertoire pieces. Hailing from North Bali, its rapidly changing melodies and rhythms express the emotional swings of a young man in love. North Bali is famous for casting female dancers in the energetic movement and temperaments of young men — from sweet and playful to powerful and fearless. Bending gender norms for generations, Teruna Jaya continues to challenge dancers and is a favorite of Balinese audiences to this day.

Note for audience: It is common in Bali for audiences watching kebyar performances to clap, cheer, and wave banners for their favorite gamelan. Feel free to join in this tradition of audience participation!

Dancer: Dewa Ayu Dewi Larassanti
Costume Design: Dewa Putu Berata, Ida Bagus Putu Eka Wirawan, Dewa Ayu Eka Putri
Çudamani traces its roots to the 1970’s when the children of Pengosekan — a village well known for its community of painters, weavers, and musicians — gathered after school to play music in the village balai (pavilion). Over the years these independent-minded children formed a new kind of organization that has become the pride of the village and respected across Indonesia.

Tourism has had a powerful impact on the arts in Bali — particularly so in Ubud. By the 1990s most of the musicians of Ubud were playing for tourists in lieu supplanting of the needs of the community. The youth of Pengosekan (located in the southern part of Ubud) often found themselves working in this system — experiencing the financial benefits of tourism while keenly aware of the artistic and cultural dangers of this arrangement. In September 1997, Founding Director Dewa Putu Berata along with Dewa Putu Rai, Dewa Ketut Alit, and others called together a number of talented and promising young people from different areas in Bali to form Sanggar Çudamani.

For twenty-four years Çudamani has maintained the highest standards of excellence and performs primarily as a spiritual offering for temples and for the activities of their village community. The group is activist and responds to the philosophical, practical and problematic issues that face Balinese life today. They invite master artists to teach rarely performed repertoire, and members are well known for the creation of new work. As a way to disseminate their message and offer their members a chance for international travel, the senior company has toured since 2002 in USA, Canada, Italy, Greece, Netherlands, and Japan. Many master musicians, scholars and ethnomusicologists from around the world turn to Çudamani for creative collaborators.

In their village, Çudamani offers free music and dance instruction for different age groups. These youth offer their music and dance as an offering in temple ceremonies and village events. Their contribution is both a benefit and point of pride in the village. Of special importance is the serious training of girls and young women in music. With the first systematic training of girls in music, many say they have set a high bar...
of excellence for other groups in Bali. Çudamani youth groups have been invited to the prestigious Bali Arts Festival where the children perform before audiences of 3000 with technical precision, artistic excellence, and incredible spirit and cohesion. As with the senior company, the children/youth of Çudamani have an island wide reputation, many of these children find their way to the senior company and some of them are performing on this tour, several of them having been with the group since the age of 8 years old or less.

**CUDAMANI LEADERSHIP**

**Dewa Putu Berata - Director** (affectionately known as Pak Dewa) is from the village of Pengosekan, in South Ubud Bali, Indonesia. He is from a respected family of musicians/painters/dancers/basket weavers. He is known internationally as a gamelan musician and composer. He is also one of the most important proponents of women's music in Bali. He is the founding director of Çudamani (Soo-da-MAH-nee) one of Bali’s most prominent performing arts companies, and has toured extensively through Asia, Europe, and North America.

His compositions bring ancient traditions of music with issues that are new and relevant to the world today. He is known for his deep knowledge of dance music and his ability to respond creatively to movement, drama, dialogue, and action in live performance. He uses these techniques in traditional performances as well as new works for dance and theater.

**Ida Bagus Putu Eka Wirawan**

Hails from the village of Batuan and is deeply respected as a performer of topeng pajegan (masked dance for ceremonies), gambuh (a 14th century form of dance drama), several forms of Balinese gamelan, traditional vocal work, and recitation. He is also an accomplished painter often sought after for important ritual and ceremonial artistic works. In Cudamani he is a core performer for both music and dance and is a senior advisor to the organization. In “Tirtha - Water” he is Hanuman in the Wayang Wong, playing gender rambat, flute, drum and also directed the making of the headdresses for wayang wong by the artists of Çudamani.

**I Dewa Putu Rai - Music Director**

One of the founding members of Çudamani, “Dewa Rai” is known for his breathtakingly nuanced drumming as well as for his compositions which are innovative and push the boundaries of ‘traditional” music, yet remain always deeply rooted in the heart and soul of Balinese music, dance, culture, and life. He oversees Çudamani’s extensive music program, which ranges from elementary school children running around the compound between classes, to all night performances in mountain temples, to international tours with some of Bali’s most accomplished artists. He will be leading his first residency with Gamelan Sekar Jaya in the spring of 2022.
Dewa Ayu Eka Putri - Choreographer
Known as a groundbreaking musician, a stunning solo dancer, and one of Bali’s most creative and courageous young choreographers, Dewa Ayu Eka Putri is truly an expression of the future of Balinese music and dance. Deeply steeped in the the music, dance, and cultural responsibilities of traditional Balinese life, she is also known for her refreshingly unique perspective as an artist. Her powerful and commanding drumming has set a precedent for women in gamelan and her dance and choreography are proof that innovation and tradition live dynamically intertwined in Bali.

I Putu Swaryandana Ichi Oka - Ryan is a young composer in Çudamani. Originally from Baturiti, Tabanan, Ryan grew up in Sayan, Ubud. Ryan studies karawitan (music), graduated with his B.A. in 2019, and is currently pursuing his Masters at the Institute of the Arts Denpasar. He has been working with the youth ensemble in Çudamani to create compositions, including the body music piece for his final exam at ISI Denpasar, which won “Best Piece” of his graduating class. This tour, he composed Legong Swatika in collaboration with Dewa Ayu Eka Putri.

Judy Mitoma - Producer
Professor Emerita - UCLA
Is a lead figure in Çudamani’s international programming and has been instrumental in the organization’s ability to tour multiple times to the US, Japan, and Europe. She is a long time advocate and supporter of Indonesian performing arts and artists and has facilitated international exchanges between artists from all over the world.

She was the Director of the UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance and Professor of Dance in the Department of World Arts & Cultures. As the founding chair of the Department of World Arts and Cultures, in 1995 she established the only arts department in the United States based on interdisciplinary, international, and intercultural research with a performance agenda. She is recipient of the distinguished 2003 John D. Rockefeller Foundation award from the Asian Cultural Council for her service in support of cultural exchange between the United States and Asia.
Dr. Andrew Clay McGraw
Associate Professor of Music and Ethnomusicologist
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I was travelling through Singapore in 1996 when a bandmate back home in Kansas City asked me to pick up for him a drum he had left in Bali. I knew nothing about Bali or Indonesia at the time, so of course I agreed. I boarded a small boat in Singapore and unintentionally spent days travelling through Sumatra and Java before eventually making it to Bali, already in a state of cultural overload. The only information my bandmate had given me was his teacher’s first name—Wayan—and his village—Peliatan. I then discovered that “Wayan” simply means “first born.” Half of the men in Peliatan were named Wayan! Amazingly, I eventually found my bandmate’s teacher. More amazingly—I eventually came to learn—this was Wayan Gandera, a revered Balinese composer and teacher who had played in the first Balinese gamelan tour to the United States in 1952. (You can find on YouTube a video of the ensemble playing on the Ed Sullivan show. Wayan Gandera is the young drummer on the right.) Gandera was one of the first gamelan teachers in the U.S., teaching at UCLA in the late 1950s. I immediately began studying with Gandera and he took me across the island on his motorcycle to see ensembles, gong-smiths, and ceremonies. One of the most overwhelming performances I saw was a mabarung, a contest between two gamelan ensembles at a large Balinese Hindu temple ceremony in the tourist village of Ubud (where Eat, Love, Pray was shot). The winning ensemble included the teachers and directors of what would later become the Cudamani ensemble.

How can I describe this performance? Everything the musicians did seemed like a magic trick. The music was incredibly complicated, but completely tuneful, performed without the aid of notation or a conductor. The musicians played interlocking patterns at speeds that seemed humanly impossible; only machines could play this fast back home! But there was nothing robotic about their performance; the thirty musicians moved as one through elegant, hairpin tempo and dynamic changes. And the audience! Back home such refined orchestral music would be received in polite silence, with the audience sitting immobilized in their pre-assigned seats (as you are right now). But this was something more like a European soccer match! Thousands of screaming fans, rooting for their home team and taunting the challenger, were crammed into any available space in the large temple courtyard, even climbing up into the trees for a better look. But this wasn’t just a rowdy group of partisans. They didn’t “ooh” and “ahh” and clap for cheap virtuosity like audiences back home, but at the most subtle and understated turns of phrase and deccelerandos. It was as if everyone in the audience was a trained musician. In fact, I later learned, training in music and dance is much more
widespread in Bali than in the West. Many members of the audience had a higher technical understanding of what they were hearing than do typical Western audiences.

The next day “Pak” (father) Gandera took me to the national conservatory in the capital Denpasar. I was studying in conservatory back home and so I looked around for the rows of small monastic cells—practice rooms—that I had come to associate with all conservatories. There were none, only large open rehearsal spaces with full gamelan playing together. Chatting with some students I asked: “Where are the practice rooms?” To me, musical training entailed hours upon hours alone in a small room, following the dots on the page, playing along to an ever faster metronome. The students seemed confused: “Why would you practice music by yourself? How stupid and boring. Music is really just an excuse to hang out together!” So listen closely to Cudamani’s music: not for the obvious, face-melting virtuosity, but for those things that they can do as a group and which can only be achieved through years of working (and playing) hard together. There is a profound lesson there for American listeners.

Dr. J. Larry Stockton
Professor and Music Department Chair
Lafayette College
Easton, PA

Over my 45 year career, I have had the pleasure of introducing students and audiences to many of the world’s great musical traditions, both as a teacher and as a performer. During that time I have had the opportunity to travel and to study the music of several cultures in an effort to bring the music and traditions of Africa and Asia into American classrooms. My studies in Bali have been especially influential in the design and implementation of my introductory course in world music traditions. The world of gamelan should be a part of every music curriculum.

My travels and study in Bali opened my eyes to the magnificent customs and rituals that comprise the long history of the island. I am deeply grateful to the performers and teachers associated with Balinese conservatories (SMKI and STSI in Denpasar) with whom I was able to engage. It is clear that music, dance, and the visual arts are embraced by everyone, as a means of cleansing, healing, observing life-affirming rituals, and, yes, entertainment. By observing and participating in the Barong dance or the rhythmically complex Kecak drama, the Balinese are continually able to reflect on the beauty of their heritage.

The interlocking rhythms of the gamelan ensemble immediately reveal the multiple textures that come together to create a captivating sound.
palette. The listener should focus on the interaction of individual parts: the metallic melody agents, the underlying 16-beat gong cycle punctuated by the large gong, the layers of accompaniment ranging from slower to faster rhythms, and the drum rhythms that guide the dance. Each player in the ensemble sacrifices their individuality for the greater service of the group, much like the division of labor in the traditional village compounds.

A listener can follow the structure of the melody by first noticing that the lower the pitch of an instrument, the longer the note value. The higher layers are often virtuosic and rhythmically more complex. Underlying everything is typically a 16-beat gong cycle, strongly punctuated on count sixteen. The very highly structured “group” atmosphere is totally dependent upon each individual contributing to a great whole. An interesting approach as a listener is to follow the adventures of an individual performer for a while and then refocus on the larger group. The multiple metallic timbres will form a curtain of sound.

A gamelan performance is often further enhanced by the element of dance, often recounting epic dramas such as the Ramayana or the Baris dance. The beautifully clad dancers use intricate foot and finger positions that both enrich the sounds of the gamelan and symbolically recount the story.

I believe my experiences in Bali have greatly expanded my musical palate as a performer and as a teacher. I love to explore the cohesive beauty of a Mozart symphony, and I also enjoy the intricacy of group dynamics inherent in a Balinese gamelan performance. While the two genres are based on different musical systems, each retains its own integrity and its relationship to the culture from which it sprang.

Dr. Rory Turner
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Bali has long been a place fascinating to scholars due to its rich and singular history and the aesthetic richness of its culture and arts. As a folklorist and anthropologist, I have long had an interest in the island dating back to my days as an undergraduate. When Goucher College launched an Intensive Course Abroad in Bali, I jumped at the opportunity. I delved more deeply into the literature on Bali, and have had the great pleasure of leading three trips with Goucher students in our J term, the past two working with my wife and Goucher colleague theatre scholar
Rebecca Free. We were blessed to come to know my dear friend and colleague Wayan Dedik Rachman, who we partner with in planning and conducting the course. Wayan had studied in the United States and pursued graduate training in ethnomusicology. A gifted musician, his ability to translate and illuminate Bali’s culture and society for outsiders was also extraordinary. With his guidance, we were able to help our students move beyond the surface levels of cultural tourism to connect with artists and communities in their work of making balanced and connected lives, even in the face of dramatic changes to the island.

What struck me and many observers of Bali deeply is the profound integration of artistic and cultural expression into the conduct of life as acts of spiritual intention and purpose. In Bali, how people act, the manner and care with which they go about their business is paramount. Acting with grace, awareness, and balance is everything, and this holds true for everyday gestures as much as for the many events and ceremonies that communities come together to create. The refined cultural forms that have developed from this sensibility are now world renowned for their complexity, refinement, and beauty.

Wayan shared with us an important Balinese philosophy which speaks to this, “Tri Hita Karana,” the three right relationships of humans: to spirits, to other humans, and to nature. This resonated powerfully with me and the work I have been engaging with in the field of cultural sustainability. Cultural sustainability is a concept that raises questions – how do we sustain the collective forms, wisdom, and practices that sustain communities, how do we change our unhealthy relationship to our ecosphere, how do we live peacefully with one another in a plural and unequal world, how do we partner with ethical reciprocity and care with others? Bali is far from the perfect paradise it is sometimes made out to be, but the Balinese have sustained deeply meaningful modes of conduct and demanding art forms in the face of enormous pressure, and Tri Hita Karana and all it encompasses points to how this might be so.

The truth of Tri Hita Karana as a pathway for well being is for the Balinese, but it is also for all of us, and continues to inspire my scholarship and teaching. From the island wide system of irrigation and water use to daily practices of blessing and prayer, the Balinese have used beauty and balance as a lodestone for alignment, collective activity and a sustaining and sustainable culture. As you watch Bali Cudamani perform, note the complexity and complementarity between the artists, a human connection, in service to the shimmering radiance and beauty that honors the spirits, and that sustains a relationship with the health and well being of community, seen not just as people, but as life, as the creation as a whole. It is humbling, beautiful, and inspiring.
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