

The University of Pittsburgh Department of Music Presents

University of Pittsburgh Gamelan

Sounds of Sunda

Bellefield Hall Auditorium

November 15, 2022, 8 p.m.

The University of Pittsburgh Gamelan is a world music ensemble dedicated to the study and performance of new and traditional music of Indonesia. “Gamelan” may refer to a variety of ensembles in Southeast Asia that predominantly use bronze percussive instruments. While there are nearly two hundred gamelan groups active in the United States today, the University of Pittsburgh Gamelan is one of only a handful that specializes in Sundanese gamelan. Sunda, a region that makes up roughly the western third of the island of Java, is home to many diverse musical traditions including several forms of gamelan, vocal music, and various folk and popular genres. Today’s program features music of the *salendro* repertory that can be used for dance, theater, and instrumental performances. *Salendro* also refers to the scale used by this gamelan, which consists of five roughly-equally spaced tones, though each gamelan is endowed with its own unique tuning or *embat* (voice).

1. *Overture*

Undang Sumarna (b. 1944)

Undang Sumarna is the first master musician from Sunda to come to the United States to teach Indonesian arts. Hailing from Sunda’s largest city, Bandung, Sumarna’s taught Sundanese music at the University of California Santa Cruz since 1974 and is responsible for nearly all the Sundanese focused groups that subsequently emerged in North America, including this one. *Overture* is a composition he created shortly after immigrating to California. In part, *Overture* is Sumarna’s response to the various popular genres he encountered that emphasize individual musicians playing solos. In this arrangement, several gamelan instruments are featured in solos or duos playing in a manner that showcases their idiomatic instrumental techniques.

2. *Gonjing Miring*

(trad.)

Gonjing Miring is a traditional opening piece for a concert to welcome the audience and establish a mood. Its cyclic form, marked by a recurring melody played in unison, may repeat any number of times. Here we use the form to showcase Sumarna’s *kendang* (drum) pedagogy. Sumarna developed ten basic patterns to teach beginning American students and used these basic patterns in several compositions to lead them to more advanced techniques.

3. *Warung Pojok*

H. Abdul Adjib (1942-2011)

Warung Pojok is a famous popular song throughout Indonesia. It was composed H. Abdul Adjib, a master of Tarling arts of the Cirebon region of West Java. *Warung Pojok* roughly translates literally to “café on the corner,” but subtly refers to a place teenagers go for intimate encounters. Today *Warung Pojok* is widely beloved, and one can find many renditions in myriad styles and genres, including pop, jazz, and *salendro*.

4. *Banjar Mati*

(arr. Undang Sumarna)

Banjar Mati (Jasmine Grove) is another standard of Sundanese gamelan *salendro*. The 1984 cassette *Sangkala Degung* by the Sundanese gamelan *Grup Gapura* became an international hit soon after its released and used *Banjar Mati* as the basis for its titular track. Sumarna’s arrangement draws heavily on this version but focuses more on the expansion of musical time known as *wilet* in West Java.

Director: Dr. Jay M. Arms

Performers: Ethan Baum, Paul Brienza, Jacqueline Colmenares, Luke Ferdinand, Macy Hornstein, Noah Kochavi, Katelyn Kruszewski, Alaina Li, Eoin Olswold, Christina Vlachos, Logan Weiss, Beth Wilson.