Established in 1997, the Indonesian gamelan program at the University of Pittsburgh has introduced thousands of students to new ways of thinking about, practicing, performing, and composing music. Under the direction of Andrew Weintraub and instructor Jay Arms, students at Pitt can learn about Indonesian music and culture by participating in the gamelan, a set of predominantly percussion instruments, including tuned gongs, metal-keyed instruments, and drums (as well as bowed lute, voice, and zither). The gamelan class is currently taught by Jay Arms and has been offered every semester since 1997.

Students in the gamelan class are encouraged to explore cross-cultural processes of learning as much as possible. Oral transmission of musical parts is preferred over written notation and working together as an ensemble is more important than developing individual talent. Students are also encouraged to play more than one instrument and to learn the relationships among them. Therefore, in our concerts, the musicians move from one instrument to another to put into practice what they have learned during the semester.

This evening's concert features two outstanding guest artists who are currently in residence at Pitt — Cia Garcia is a musician, dancer, and choreographer from Bandung, West Java, and Ed Garcia, a musician, composer, and scholar of Sundanese music and dance. Cia and Ed have collaborated as dancer and *kendang* (drum) player for nearly a decade, honing their distinctive approach to Sundanese dance forms. During the past 25 years, over 50 guest artists from Indonesia have been invited to the university to teach, present workshops and lecture-demonstrations, and perform in concerts for the larger Pittsburgh community. This program offers Pitt students a rare opportunity to study music, dance, and theater with some of Indonesia's finest artists. The concerts not only demonstrate traditional forms of music, dance, and theater, but they also provide an opportunity for musical and theatrical experimentation. For this year's concert we honor the legacy of one of our teachers, Pa Undang Sumarna, featuring many of the classical dances he's known for accompanying on his primary instrument, the kendang, as well as his own compositions and those of his family.

The Legacy of Undang Sumarna

Undang Sumarna (b. 1949) is a master *kendang* (drum) virtuoso from Bandung, West Java. By the time came to the US in 1974 to teach at the Center for World Music in Berkeley, California, he already earned an international reputation as dance drummer and leader of *wayang golek* (rod puppet) performances. He became the first master musician from Sunda to come to the United States to teach Indonesian arts and built a career teaching West Javanese music at the University of California Santa Cruz (UCSC).

Over his 50-year career in the US, Pa Undang has taught thousands of students to play gamelan, exposing multiple generations of American students to Sundanese performing arts. Many of his students would go on to study the Indonesian language, dance, theater, and music, and some went on to establish other programs in Sundanese gamelan, including this one at the University of Pittsburgh. Directors Andrew Weintraub and Jay Arms both studied first with Pa Undang, as did guest artist Ed Garcia. Our professional lives and creative practices are indebted to Pa Undang's efforts and generosity. Last spring, Pa Undang retired from UCSC, marking the end of an era and the beginning of a new one. Tonight, we honor his legacy, from his family's role in what ethnomusicologist (and Pa Undang student) Henry Spiller calls the renaissance of Sundanese arts in the 1920s and Undang's own expertise in Sundanese classical dance, to his pedagogical techniques and overall championing of Sundanese and Indonesian performing arts around the world.

Indonesia

The modern nation of Indonesia consists of about 17,000 islands (of which a few thousand are populated), the fourth largest population in the world, hundreds of ethnic groups, and over seven hundred languages spoken. The cultural and musical diversity of this modern island community is staggering. The University of Pittsburgh group plays music created by Sundanese people who inhabit roughly the western third of the island of Java. The approximately 49 million Sundanese make up the second largest ethnic group in Indonesia. While the majority of the population lives in rural or semi-rural settings, large cities have become increasingly central to the creation and patronage of new artistic genres, including those represented this evening.

Gamelan

In Indonesia, gamelan music is played to accompany dance, drama, puppet theater, and martial arts, as well as for concerts of listening music. Gamelan is performed for special occasions and to mark important life-cycle events. Members of the ensemble sit cross-legged on the stage floor and strike the instruments with padded mallets called *panakol.*

The University of Pittsburgh owns two gamelan sets. Each set has its own name that signifies its unique character, tuning, and localized identity. The first gamelan, which arrived in October 1995, is named "*Kyai Tirta Rukmi*," the "Venerable Rivers of Gold." Its name indicates the rivers of Pittsburgh and the gold paint on the instrument stands; of course, we're proud of the black and gold too! This gamelan is tuned to *laras salendro*, a five-tone tuning system made up of approximately equidistant intervals with a related set of instruments tune to the seven-tone *laras pelog* tuning system. The *salendro* and

pelog scales of this gamelan share only one tone in common. The second set of instruments, which arrived in March 2005, is named "*Ligar Pasundan*," the "Fragrance of Pasundan." This name suggests that the gamelan, like the fragrance of a flower, spreads its influence far from its place of origin in the Pasundan region of West Java. This gamelan is tuned to *laras degung*, a five-tone tuning system made up of large and small intervals. This concert also features the *rabab* (spike fiddle) *suling* (*bamboo* flute), and *kacapi* (20-string zither) as solo instruments with the gamelan.

Each instrument in the ensemble plays one of four primary musical functions or roles, which contribute to the rich polyphonic layering or strata of sound. The "structural melody," usually played on the metal-keyed instruments, constitutes the basic underlying melodic foundation for each piece. "Elaboration," played on the *gambang* (xylophone), and bonang (small kettle gongs on a rack), refers to melodic variation and ornamentation based on the structural melody. "Punctuation," played on the large and small hanging gongs and *kenong* (large kettle gongs on a rack), refers to the temporal marking of important points in the rhythmic cycle. Finally, the "time-keeping" function is realized by the drummer, who signals the beginning and ending of pieces, directs tempo changes, and controls the dynamics of the music.

1. *Galaktik Mungut*

   Modern gamelan degung was created for local Sundanese regents (*bupati*) of West Java during the early 20th century. These regents administered the Dutch cultivation system (*Cultuurstelsel*) for the province of West Java. Regents promoted the performing arts for the entertainment of their families and other aristocrats of the Dutch colonial state. In its classic pre-independence form, gamelan degung is entirely instrumental and features the melodic improvisations of the suling.

2. *Tari Ratu Graeni* (1949) Chor. Raden Tjetje Somantri

   This classical dance portrays the majestic Queen Graeni as she prepares herself to defend her kingdom against an attack from a fierce neighboring enemy kingdom. The character practices with her powerful Javanese knife (*keris*) in preparation of the impending battle. She dons a skirt with a long tail that drags on the ground behind her, which serves to remind her that she carries her responsibilities to her family and her people with her into battle.

3. *Seler Degung – Catrik* Arr. Burhan Sukarma

   In the *klasik* genre of gamelan degung, there two related groups of pieces called *sekar agung* (large pieces) and *sekar alit* (small pieces). The *sekar agung* are elaborate compositions focused on a core melody and often feature irregular metrical structures punctuated by the *goong agung* (great gong). The *sekar alit*, conversely, are simpler structures organized in repeating cycles marked by the *goong agung.* In this performance we draw on the arranging style of Pa Burhan Sukarma, master suling player and leader of Pusaka Sunda, a gamelan degung group based in San Jose, California.

4. *Banjar Mati* (Jasmine Grove) is an iconic piece of Sundanese gamelan *salendro*, the name of the 5-tone scale. It can be used to accompany dance or played as an instrumental piece. This performance uses *Banjar Mati* to showcase an important element of Sumarna's gamelan pedagogy for his American students. When he first moved to California, *kendang Sunda* was considered especially challenging to learn, let alone master for a non-Sundanese musician. As a *kendang* virtuoso Undang set about creating a way to introduce his students to *kendang* and build their skills toward accompanying classical dance in his style. The first step of this process was a set of 10 simple patterns derived from actual dances. Taken together they form a kind of progressive etude series for students to learn the basic techniques of *kendang Sunda.*

5. *Overture* Undang Sumarna

   Overture is a composition Pa Undang created shortly after immigrating to California in 1980. In part, *Overture* represents Sumarna's response to the various popular genres he encountered that emphasize individual musicians playing solos. This emphasis on individuals contrasts with the usual approach to playing gamelan, in which all the instruments play together and contribute to the collective texture. In this arrangement, Undang explores a soloistic approach to the gamelan by featuring several gamelan instruments in solos or duos that play in a manner that showcases their idiomatic instrumental techniques.

6. *Tari Topeng Kencana Wungu* Chor. R. Nugraha Sudiredja (1970–76), after Wentar (ca. 1937–46)

This masked dance (*tari topeng*) portrays the queen of the Majapahit kingdom, named *Kencana Wungu*. As with much classical Sundanese dance, the tempo of the musical accompaniment fluctuates according to the movement of the dance. The drummer interprets these movements and provides signals for the gamelan to slow down or speed up so that the gong cycles synchronize with dancer's gestures. This creates a dynamic performance environment in which the musicians must be alert and responsive the dancer moment by moment.

Intermission

1. *Electric Noise Poetry*

This piece is a collaboration between Herry Sutresna, Rizky Sasono, Hirdzan Maulana, who developed this performance during the events of the symposium "The Politics of Contemporary Sound in Indonesia" held at Pitt this week.

2. *Kroncong Kemayoran*

Nyak Ina Raseuki and Hannah Standiford perform a classic piece of *kroncong*, Indonesia's national music.

3. *Tari Merak* Chor. Irawati Durban Ardjo 1965, after Somantri, 1955

This dance portrays the nature and beauty of the proud peacocks. The Peacock Dance was first choreographed by R. Tjetje Somantri in 1955. Inspired by the theme of her teacher's choreography, Irawati choreographed today's Peacock Dance, creating a new costume, and adding some ballet and Balinese dance movements which had influenced her at that time. In homage of Undang's family's contribution towards Sundanese presentational dance and music, tonight we will perform the original musical introduction that was composed by Abah Kayat (Undang's grandfather), who was the lead musician of Somantri's original dance choreography.

4. *Walangsungsang*

Walangsungsan is another piece of gamelan *degung* music in the *klasik* style.

5. *Lawungan* Abah Kayat

Abah Kayat was a leading composer and innovator of Sundanese arts during the 1920s. Working with renown choreographers such as Raden Tjetje Somantri, he composed much of the music that laid the groundwork for classical Sundanese dance of the last century. His grandson, Undang Sumarna, continues to champion the style of Pa Kayat, even as younger musicians developed in newer directions. *Lawungan* is one of several compositions by Pa Kayat for gamelan degung that Sumarna revived recently with his students at UCSC. These pieces are relatively short and share some characteristics with compositions in the more recent *klasik* repertoire, which largely emerged in the mid-twentieth century. Regardless, Pa Kayat's pieces have a unique quality that distinguishes his style from more commonly played pieces for degung. This arrangement of *Lawungan* was made by the University of Pittsburgh Gamelan with Ed Garcia based on Sumarna's memory and our own sense of the composition while playing together.

6. *Tari Topeng Koncaran* Chor. Raden Tjetje Somantri (1950), after Koncar and Wentar (1918)

Featuring both masked and unmasked characters from the solo dancer, *Koncaran* depicts important figures of the Javanese Damarwulan cycle. The refined princess Anjasmara, and the villainous king Menak Jingga play pivotal roles. In the first half of the dance, the dancer portrays Anjasmara waiting for her lover, the prince Damarwulan, who has been sent by the Majapahit queen to kill the rebellious Menak Jingga. In the second half of the piece, the dancer dons a mask and transforms into the boisterous character of Menak Jingga himself. As these two characters are dichotomous in nature, the accompanying music for Anjasmara is softer, subtler, and slower in comparison to the faster, wilder music for Menak Jingga.

7. *Rampak Kendang*

"*Rampak*" refers to a Sundanese performance practice in which many instruments or voices play or sing together in unison. In this case, the *kendang* (drums) execute a tightly choreographed sequence of patterns composed by Undang Sumarna. Undang developed his version of *Rampak Kendang* in the 1990s as a culmination of his beginning kendang pedagogy featured earlier in this program. By learning this piece, students apply their new drumming skills in an exciting, fast-paced show stopping piece, demonstrating mastery of the techniques

through their performance. From here, students are prepared to start learning to accompany classical dance in Undang's style, from which these patterns derive. Since its conception, Undang's *Rampak Kendang* has been a pivotal piece in his students' learning trajectory, and a perennial celebratory piece to close concerts. We invite to celebrate Undang's legacy and the accomplishments of Pitt gamelan students by dancing with us!

Gamelan Musicians: Ethan Baum, Sreya Dey, Lydia Freethy, Ava Gargiulo, Noah Kochavi, Miri Leaderman-Bray, Christopher Norris, Ruben Pawar, Danielle Payne, Maggie Shaheen, Mariella Slatter, Joseph Stuter, devon tipp (teaching assistant), and Jenna Toth.

Directors: Andrew Weintraub, Jay M. Arms

Guest Artists:

Cia Garcia was born in Jakarta, Indonesia, and was raised in Bandung, West Java. She has studied Sundanese traditional female dances, masked dances, and *jaipongan* through renowned dance programs like Pusbitari (led by Irawati Durban) and Jugala (led by Gugum Gumbira). She has performed around Indonesia and USA, namely in Jakarta, Bandung, New York, Seattle, Madison, Los Angeles, and throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Cia has often performed with groups like Pusaka Sunda (*gamelan degung* group in San Jose, California), Harnasari (dance troupe in San Francisco), and Mayang Sunda (*gamelan salendro* group in Santa Cruz, California). She has choreographed and performed in original dance pieces for the UC Santa Cruz Theater Department and with Oakland-based group Gamelan X. Cia graduated from Padjajaran University in Jatinangor, West Java, and currently lives in Santa Cruz.

Ed Garcia has studied Sundanese music since 2004, mainly studying with master drummer Undang Sumarna at UC Santa Cruz. He has studied with other master musicians such as Burhan Sukarma in San Jose, California, and Mamat Rahmat in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. In 2014-15, Ed was awarded a Darmasiswa scholarship to study gamelan at the Institute of Indonesian Arts and Culture in Bandung. In 2019-20, he conducted Fulbright research in Bandung that compares the musical repertoire, performance techniques, and history of prominent 20th century Sundanese dance styles from a dance-drumming perspective (gamelan drumming that accompanies dancers' movements). Ed has a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in music composition from UC Santa Cruz and a Master of Fine Arts degree in percussion performance from California Institute of the Arts.

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