

THE DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Friday, April 22, 2022 at 7:30 PM

Hertz Hall, University of California, Berkeley

Javanese Shadow Play “Tunggu Tunggorono”

Midiyanto, dhalang (*shadow master*)

accompanied by Gamelan Sari Raras, directed by Midiyanto and Ben Brinner
featuring Heni Savitri, *singer*, and Darsono Hadiraharjo, *drummer*

THE STORY

The first act, *Pathet Nem*, opens in the palace of Gatotkaca, King of Pringgandani. Disturbed by the encroachment of the neighboring kingdom of Trajutriska, he holds a meeting to discuss what action to take. At the end of the meeting he and his troops set out for Trajutriska. This type of scene, called *Budalan* (departing), occurs in almost every shadow play performance. It involves a fast piece that can be molded to accompany the differing movement styles of a sequence of puppets ranging from the king and his courtiers to his army (a single large puppet) as they move across the screen. A series of confrontations ensues.



Gatotkaca

The second act of a wayang, called *Pathet Sanga*, generally takes place far from civilization in a forest or on a mountain top, where a hero is meditating in isolation. Comedy and light musical entertainment typically interrupt the flow of the narrative during this act. Tonight we see Arjuna, the ultimate knight (*satriya*) with his faithful companions: the god Semar and his three squabbling sons. Arjuna sets out to aid his nephew Gatotkaca upon hearing about his conflict with the neighboring king Boma. This journey through the forest is interrupted by several ogres.



Arjuna



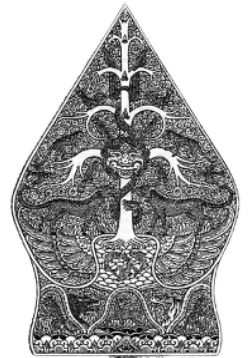
Semar, Gareng, Petruk, and Bagong

The third and final act, *Pathet Manyura*, opens with another royal meeting, this time a confrontation between Kresna and Bima. Stay tuned!



Kresna

Throughout the performance you will see the special puppet called *gunungan* (mountain) or *kayon* (tree). It can be used like a curtain to mark the beginning and the end of the play as well as acts and scenes, but it also can serve as a prop, representing a palace gate or mountain, or a force of nature such as wind or wave.



Kayon

Please darken your phone’s screen at all times during the performance.

Upcoming Gamelan Performances

Wednesday, April 27, 2022 | Free Noon Concert of Javanese Gamelan

Wednesday, May 4, 2022 | Free Noon Concert of Balinese Gamelan

Javanese Shadow Play “Tunggu Tunggorono”

This is a performance about political intrigue that drives two kings to war, about one country chipping away at the territory of another, and about family conflict. The kings are Boma Narakasura and Gatotkaca, their kingdoms are Trajutrigna and Pringgandani, and their family ties go to the heart of the Mahabharata epic. Boma Narakasura is the son of the god Visnu, incarnated as King Kresna. Gatotkaca, is the son of Bima, the biggest, brawniest of the five Pandawa brothers who are the central figures in the Mahabharata. Since the Pandawas are cousins of Kresna, family strife erupts when the scheming prime minister of Trajutrigna makes a land grab across the border in Pringgandani. Kresna and Bima - accustomed to being allies in the ongoing struggles of the Pandawas against their cousins the Kurawas - are forced to side with their own sons against each other.

Drama, philosophy, comedy, music, and dance (translated to puppet movement) are integrated into a *wayang kulit* performance. This art form, recognized as an intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO, has deep local roots (there is a tenth-century written reference to *wayang*) as well as connections to traditions in other parts of Indonesia and mainland Southeast Asia. Storylines and characters are usually drawn from the Mahabharata and Ramayana cycles that spread from South Asia throughout Southeast Asia over one thousand years ago in both written and oral forms. Wayang is widely believed to encapsulate central aspects of Javanese culture while remaining flexible enough to adapt to contemporary tastes and socio-political situations.

The *dhalang* (shadow master), who is responsible for this synthesis, must master diverse arts in order to create or recreate a story that incorporates humor and action as well as current issues, timeless philosophical teachings, and elements of Javanese myth, legend and history. Every performance involves narrating scenes, providing distinctive voices for each of the characters, using speech levels appropriate to their relative rank, manipulating the puppets as they walk, dance, and battle, singing songs that express calm, excitement, anger and sorrow, and directing the *gamelan* with a system of cues.

A *dhalang* may also be known as a spiritual leader or practitioner and is usually highly respected. He draws on a large repertoire of stories, some well-known and relatively fixed while others may be new inventions. In either case the *dhalang* includes both stereotypical and more flexible elements, ensuring the uniqueness of each performance while rarely straying far from traditional practice. Despite this there have been considerable changes over time, particularly noticeable in recent decades.

The *dhalang* usually has a set of several hundred puppets, but may use ‘only’ forty or fifty of those on a given night, the others being arrayed on either side of the screen. Most of these puppets conform to a few character types — including kings and queens, princes and princesses, refined warriors, comic servants, hermits, gods, and ogres— which can be identified by voice, style of movement and physical features such as the shape and size of the nose and eyes or the general stance. Within these stock types there are many specific characters with particular names, histories, attitudes, speech patterns and social ranks. When speaking for the puppets the *dhalang* must observe the levels of language appropriate to the relative age and status of each puppet. (Javanese has formal, informal, and mixed vocabularies).

Gamelan music helps to bring the puppets to life, enables the *dhalang* to set a scene, and provides a sonic backdrop for story-telling. The *dhalang* communicates with the musicians via rhythms tapped on the wooden puppet box or on bronze plates hanging from that box. He also uses sung and spoken cues as well as certain puppet movements to direct the *gamelan*. The drummer is the key link who mediates most of the *dhalang*'s directives, translating them into musical cues embedded in the flow of sound. The drummer also responds to the puppets' movements and amplifies them with sound effects. Other musicians who take leading roles in the ensemble include the *bonang* (gong chime player) for the loud, fast pieces and the *rebab* (spike fiddle) and *gendèr* (metallophone) players for the slower, softer pieces. The latter two also accompany the *dhalang*'s songs and play the introductory phrases to many of the pieces that he requests. The various gongs are used to delineate the temporal frameworks within which the *dhalang* moves the puppets and unfolds his narrative. Other instruments in the *gamelan* come to the fore or recede as tempos and textures change to suit the mood.

Our performance is an abbreviated one, including some of the main components of a full performance (which would typically last all night) but with less elaboration. Such shortened shadow plays developed both in Indonesia and abroad in the second half of the twentieth century to accommodate the time constraints of modern life, changing attention spans, and audience expectations.

We begin with an overture that introduces virtually every traditional *wayang*. This overture sets forth the main Javanese musical forms in a medley that lasts fifteen to twenty minutes, proceeding from long, slow pieces to shorter, faster ones. Once the overture is ended and the play has begun we invite you to move around the hall (quietly) and see the play from the performers' side as well as the shadow side.

PERFORMERS

Midiyanto is a musician and puppet master (*dhalang*) from Wonogiri, Central Java, raised in a family of musicians, *dhalangs*, and dancers. He studied at the high school conservatory and performing arts college in Surakarta before embarking on an international career that has spanned over 35 years, teaching and performing extensively in the United States, Singapore, New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. He has taught and directed gamelan at UC Berkeley since 2004, after an earlier stint here from 1988 to 1992. In the interim, he was gamelan director at Lewis & Clark College, where he earned an MA. He has been featured in several documentary films and directed the gamelan on the CD *Shadow Music of Java*, recorded at the Smithsonian.

Darsono Hadiraharjo, comes from a prominent Central Javanese family of musicians and *dhalangs*. He studied music and *wayang* with his family and later at the Indonesian Arts Institute in Surakarta. In addition, he has spent time studying and performing the particular traditions of the Mangkunegaran princely court in Surakarta. Darsono currently teaches gamelan at several colleges in New England and has

performed with numerous gamelan groups across the United States, including several concerts with our ensemble.

Heni Savitri is also a graduate of the Indonesian Arts Institute in Surakarta, where she was frequently selected as the singer for many recordings of new faculty compositions and traditional works, representing the academy in the 2008 international vocal competition in Jakarta. She has sung with Sari Raras and with other leading gamelan groups around the U.S. for over ten years. Together with her husband Midiyanto, she has trained their ten-year-old son Dhananjaya who is playing in the gamelan tonight.

Ben Brinner, professor in the Dept. of Music, is an ethnomusicologist specializing in Javanese gamelan. Although recently retired, he continues to teach. He has been playing gamelan since 1977, has studied and conducted research in Java since the 1980s, publishing *Knowing Music, Making Music: Javanese Gamelan and the Theory of Musical Competence and Interaction* (University of Chicago Press, 1995) and the textbook *Music in Central Java* (Oxford University Press, 2007), which includes audio examples recorded under Midiyanto's direction in Java.

Gamelan Sari Raras is an ensemble dedicated to the performance of Javanese *gamelan* music. Associated with the Department of Music at the University of California, Berkeley, Sari Raras was founded in 1988 by Midiyanto and Ben Brinner. The ensemble includes current and former Berkeley students as well as faculty and community members. Among them are five other PhDs in ethnomusicology - Lisa Gold, Henry Spiller, Richard Wallis, Susan Walton, and Dustin Wiebe - who all have research expertise and teaching experience in Indonesian performing arts. Sari Raras (essence of harmony) performs on the instruments of Gamelan Kyahi Udan Mas, which was made in Java in the early twentieth century and generously donated to the Department of Music by Sam and Louise Scripps in 1975 together with the fine set of shadow puppets used in this performance.

Members of Sari Raras: Jennifer Bergman, Myra Chachkin, Carla Fabrizio, Lisa Gold, Cynthia Gould, Victoria Haworth, Lisa Ho, Patrick Liddell, Paul Miller, Sharon Millman, Ashley Morris, Ion Nami Murata, Christopher Olson, Stephen Parris, Rebecca Selin, Henry Spiller, Richard Wallis, Susan Walton, Dustin Wiebe, and Desiré Whitmore. Special guests: Jesse Snyder and Stephanie Shadbolt.