

“The Birth of Kala” by Segara Madu (Balinese *gendér wayang* group) with Tim Jones (storyteller). Concert programme.

**Brunei Gallery concert hall, SOAS
Monday 19th March 2012, 7pm**

Kala is a demon born from a drop of the god Siwa’s sperm. His insatiable hunger compels him to devour humankind. The story of Kala is bound up with the instruments known as *gendér wayang* – their origin, their component structure, their use in ritual and story telling and how they can lead people from one state of being to another.

The first half of the concert tells the story of Kala and the instruments, using traditional music. The second is a more abstract reflection on it, including some new pieces and ending with a piece, Sudamala, used in Bali to prepare a holy water of purification to lift Kala’s curse. In this way, the programme is a kind of meditation on the instruments and their meanings.

Gendér wayang is the name given to a small quartet of bronze metallophones, used in Bali to accompany the shadow play (*wayang kulit*), a sacred drama based on stories from ancient Indian epics. It also serves as a ritual ensemble playing for life-cycle ceremonies, temple festivals, purification rituals and cremations as part of Bali’s rich Hindu heritage. The playing technique in this miniature gamelan ensemble is very demanding, as players must damp the ringing notes with their wrists while executing high-speed figuration that interlocks between the instruments. Bamboo resonating tubes beneath the keys give the sound a unique resonance.

Segara Madu is a *gendér wayang* group based at SOAS, directed and taught by Nick Gray. The performers are: Paula Friar, Emily Garland, Rachel Hewitt and Nick Gray.

Storyteller **Tim Jones** is a singer, performer, composer, teacher and workshop facilitator. He has pioneered a method of voice teaching, **The Nature of Sound** that draws on both his long study of South Indian music and bhakti (devotion) spiritual traditions with K.R. Sivasankara Pannikar, **Amerta Movement** with Suprpto Suryodarmo from Java, and his experience as a qualified craniosacral therapist.

Nick Gray composes and lectures on music at SOAS. He studied *gendér wayang* for several years with I Wayan Loceng in Sukawati, a village famed for its shadow puppetry and the complexity of its *gendér* style.

Programme:

- 1) Sekar Sungsang (trad.). An opening piece whose dense polyphony reflects the ‘upside-down inside-out’ shape of the Sungsang flower.
- 2) Tulang Lindung (trad.). Part of the overture for the shadow puppet play, the simple fluid melody reflects the meaning of the title: ‘eel-bone’.
- 3) Merak Ngelo (trad.). A piece used as for ritual or as an opening piece.

- 4) Grebeg (trad.). A piece for action scenes in the shadow play.
- 5) Rebong (trad.). Used for love scenes in the shadow play.

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- 6) Krepetan (trad.). Used for action scenes in the shadow play.
- 7) The Birth of Kala (Nick Gray, 2011). An extended reflection on the Kala stories.
- 8) Saraswati (Nick Gray, 2011). A fast-style piece which incorporates elements of imitative counterpoint.
- 9) Tabuh Gari/Sudamala (trad.). Tabuh Gari is a closing piece. Sudamala is for a ritual after a purificatory shadow play in which the puppeteer uses the puppets to create holy water to lift Kala's curse from a child born on an inauspicious day or from those suffering from other spiritual danger.

The stories for tonight's performance were adapted from various oral sources in Bali, in particular from I Wayan Loceng, and also incorporate ideas from the following books:

- Hooykaas, C. (1973) *Kama and Kala: materials for the study of shadow theatre in Bali*. Amsterdam: North-Holland Publishing Company.
- Stephen, Michele (2005) *Desire divine and demonic: Balinese mysticism in the paintings of I Ketut Budiana and I Gusti Nyoman Mirdiana*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.

Thanks to: my teacher, the late I Wayan Loceng; Ida Wayan Oka Granoka for inspiration; Ni Made Pujawati for the offerings; Jeremy Glasgow for the light and sound. Projected images copyright Pakhnyushcha, Dudorev Mikhail, used under license from Shutterstock.com, 2012.