Gamelan is the prevailing traditional music of Indonesia. Formerly the “Dutch East Indies,” Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world and its third largest democracy. An archipelago of over 7,000 islands, it is home to over 350 distinct ethnic groups and spans a region of Southeast Asia roughly the same size as Europe. Gamelan is an intricate blend of sonorities, structured and patterned in unique rhythmic and melodic systems. It is built largely on tuned bronze percussion, and often accompanies highly formalized dance. Though an ancient tradition with well-established values and practices, gamelan is still vital, under constant renewal and expansion. The word refers to the ensemble, the music tradition, and the instruments: we are a gamelan; we play gamelan; we have a gamelan. The sophisticated percussion-based gamelan music of Bali and Java, and the highly refined dance and shadow theater with which it is often performed, rank among the world’s richest cultural traditions.

**Javanese Gamelan**

*Ladrang Wilujeng*. *Slendro Manyura* mode. Traditional Javanese composition. This piece is sometimes called *Selamat*, meaning safety, or peace. It is a traditional work in the refined style of Central Javanese court gamelan, performed to welcome guests and insure a successful performance.

*Dhendhang Semarang, Slendang Biru*. Two compositions by the renowned Javanese musician and shadow puppeteer Ki Nartosabdho. Composed in the early 1960s. The lyrics are flirtatious riddles in both Indonesian and Javanese.

*Rujak Jeruk*. *Slendro Manyura* mode. Traditional composition in the ladrangan form. The lyrics are an exhortation to a lover not to stray.

**Reconstruction of Performances from the 1889 Paris Exposition.** Claude Debussy heard Javanese gamelan at the 1893 Paris Exposition and many musicologists have proposed that its influence can be heard in works such as *Pagodes, La Mer*, and *Fantaisie*. Although we don’t have any evidence of recorded music from the Paris Exposition, the same gamelan ensemble was dispatched to the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition. The Javanese scholar and musician Sumarsam arranged this suite of pieces for Gamelan Raga Kusuma based on cylinder recordings from the Columbian exposition. *Ketawang Subakastawa, Srepegan, Palaran Asmaradana.*

**Caping Gunung.** Composed in the early 1960s by Gesang for the Indonesian keroncong (string-band) ensemble, this piece was subsequently adapted into the gamelan repertoire. It portrays the struggle of Indonesian freedom fighters against Dutch colonial rule.

**Keroncong Ensemble**

*Keroncong* is the traditional string-band music of Indonesia, tracing its roots to European trade and colonial interactions beginning at the end of the 15th century. It is known throughout the archipelago but is especially popular in Central Java where most of the current repertoire was created in the 1960s. The *langgam Jawa* style of keroncong, which we are performing tonight, is heavily influenced by gamelan techniques and tunings.

*Caping Gunung*. The keroncong version of Gesang’s composition.

*Yen Ing Tawang ana Lintang*. Composed in the early 1960s by Andjar Any while awaiting the birth of his daughter.
**Gambang Suling.** Composed in the early 1960s by Nartosabdho. The lyrics describe the sounds of gamelan music.

**Balinese Gamelan**

**Gambang Suling.** Nartosabdho’s tune was popular throughout the archipelago and was adapted by local ensembles. Here is what the Balinese did with it, in the virtuosic kebyar style. This version was popularized by the Gunung Sari ensemble from Peliatan village.

**Topeng Suite.** Masked dance suite featuring Gusti Sudarta. Tari (dance) Topeng (mask) Pajegan (suite) are a feature of Balinese temple ceremonies in which a single dancer portrays stock characters in highly stylized choreographies. Today Sudarta will present Topeng Keris (a strong but refined character), Topeng Tua (an old man remembering his youth), Penasar (the social critic), and two Bondres (clowns).

**Suara Sandi.** An instrumental work in the seven-tone semar pegulingan style, composed in 1984 by the renowned Balinese composer I Nyoman Windha.

**Ensembles and Featured Artist**

I Gusti Putu Sudarta was born into a family of artists in Bedulu village and has been performing music, dance, and shadow theater since he was six years old. He is a permanent faculty member in the theater department at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Bali and holds a masters degree in theater from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts in Solo, Java. He regularly performs various forms of traditional Balinese music, mask dance and shadow theater in ceremonial contexts and has taken part in several international tours and inter-cultural experimental music and theater collaborations. He has performed and taught extensively in Europe, Asia and North America.

The Rumput kerongcong ensemble was formed in 2015 by Hannah Standiford and Andy McGraw and has toured Indonesia twice, collaborating and studying with many Javanese master musicians. Zack Cain, Kyle Dosier, Brian Larson, Andy McGraw, John Priestley, Brandon Simmons, Hannah Standiford, Paul Willson, Jessica Zike. www.rumputband.com

**Gamelan Raga Kusuma** is a community gamelan founded in 2007 by Andy McGraw and Gusti Putu Sudarta, in residence at the University of Richmond. Sudarta bestowed the name “Raga Kusuma,” which means “intense togetherness,” to the group in 2008. The ensemble has appeared in performances in Bali, the Smithsonian Institution, the Indonesian Embassy and in several venues along the East Coast. Our Balinese gamelan ensemble was made in 2006 by Pande Sukerta, Bali’s foremost gongsmit. Our Javanese gamelan was made in the 1950s outside of Solo, Central Java and is on loan from the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Washington DC.

Membership in Gamelan Raga Kusuma is free and open to the public. See: www.ragakusuma.org, our Facebook page, or email amcgraw@richmond.edu for more information. Rehearsals are held Sunday and Thursday evenings 6-8 at the Global Music Studio in North Court at the University of Richmond.


**Upcoming Events:**

**Free Workshops in Balinese Music and Dance.** Sunday February 3rd. 3:00-4:30. University of Richmond, North Court. Join Gamelan Raga Kusuma for this free, all-ages workshop. Gusti Sudarta will lead a dance workshop in the North Court Choir Room while Andy McGraw and members of gamelan Raga Kusuma lead a music workshop in the North Court Global Music Studio. No previous music or dance experience necessary.