An Evening of Japanese and Balinese Music

UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble
Kyoko Okamoto, director

UMD Gamelan Saraswati
I Nyoman Suadin, director

Yasashii gasso Kyoku..........................Yoshihisa Saito, arr., 1990
(Traditional Japanese Ensemble Music)

- Medley of Old Japanese Songs:
  - Sakura (Cherry Blossoms)
  - Kazoe Uta (Counting Song)
  - Oedo Nihonbashi (The Bridge in Edo)

First koto: Kaleb Bordner, Saarah Javed, Christopher Liu,
James Lord, Chelsea Rose Stolt, Danielle Thompson,
Frederique Naomi Thompson, Kane Wade,
Xinyue Wang, Yuchu Ellen Wang, Tong Wu

Second koto: Kyoko Okamoto

Bass koto: Donnie Scally

Hana (Flowers) ..................................Masaaki Kikushiro, comp., 1967

First koto: Christopher Liu, Xinyue Wang
Second koto: Frederique Naomi Thompson
Tonight’s concert will include pieces selected from the following. Several of the selections also feature dancers (names to be announced at the beginning of the concert).

**Bapang Selisir** (traditional) .............Choreographed by Nyoman Suadin

The music is the traditional piece *Bapang Selisir* and is an example of the courtly *Semar Pegulingan* style. There is a base melody, and the drummer leading the musicians cues the *anggels* or breaks. The dance is in the refined female style and draws on movements from the classical Balinese dance *Legong*, which itself evolved from the court dance drama called *Gambuh*.

**Capung Gantung** (traditional)

Bali is surrounded by beautiful nature, which inspires a lot of the compositions. The rice fields and plants in Bali are home to many types of wildlife. This piece for *gamelan angklung* means “hanging dragonfly.”

**Ngedas Lemah** (traditional)

This instrumental piece in the classical style is inspired by the early dawn before the sunrise. There is the feeling of quiet, openness and the beginning of the day.

**Gilak Penutup** ..................................Composed by Nyoman Suadin

There are many Balinese compositions based on the eight-beat *gilak* pattern. Characterized by the cyclical gong pattern that alternates between the large gong and the small, higher-pitched *kem par*, the music using the *gilak* form typically accompanies ceremonial processions in Bali or serves as the basis for longer compositions. This piece is played to close this evening’s performance.

Program is approximately 90 minutes, which includes a 15-minute intermission.
Gamelan Saraswati

Members: Ben Belzer, Jonathan Clancy, Marie Crenwelge, Ying Diao, Adam Echavarren, Lucas Fonseca, Kim Harris, Alex Hubbard, Mohammad Khan, Melanie Kuperstein, Ana Larios, Shaiyon Merkel, Benjamin Morgan, William Neri, Maria Oei, Alice Rogers, Nainil Shah, Andrew Shebest, Justine Sim, Sonali Singh, Andrea Vercoe, Kane Wade. All are students in the performing ensemble courses MUSC 129G (undergraduate) and 629G (graduate), which are open to students across the university.

The University of Maryland Gamelan Saraswati is part of the Musicology and Ethnomusicology Division of the School of Music, and includes both undergraduate and graduate students from the School of Music and other departments at UMD. The *gamelan angklung* instruments were built by I Wayan Beratha, a leading instrument maker, composer, performer and teacher in Bali. Gamelan Saraswati takes its name from Saraswati, the Hindu goddess of knowledge and the arts.

A *gamelan* is a musical ensemble from Indonesia, typically from the islands of Bali or Java, featuring tuned metal-keyed xylophones and gongs, “conducted” by drums, and sometimes adding wind or stringed instruments. The word “gamelan” (pronounced “gah-meh-lan”) comes from the Javanese word “gamel,” meaning “to strike” or “to play.”

In Bali, the musical traditions evolved primarily in the context of the multifaceted ceremonies of Balinese Hindu culture. Performance of music and dance is seen as an offering to the Hindu deities, who are invited down from the heavens to visit the temples during temple ceremonies and other auspicious ritual occasions. In Bali, dance is always closely connected to the music. Many gamelan performances include dance as a major component. The details of choreography and dance gesture are tightly synchronized with the music’s accents and textures. The movement is closely associated with the rhythms produced by the gamelan. The multiple levels of articulations in the face, eyes, hands, arms, hips and feet are coordinated to reflect layers of percussive sounds.

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble**

The performers are students from the UMD Japanese Koto Ensemble classes (MUSC129K/629K), including both undergraduate and graduate students from the School of Music and other departments of the University of Maryland.

Performers are directed by [Kyoko Okamoto](https://www.kotosociety.org), a native of Japan, who graduated from the University of Foreign Studies and is a certified teacher of the Ikuta School of Koto. She has studied with Kazue Hara of Ashiya, Japan.

Okamoto Sensei’s lecture/concerts have delighted universities and community audiences nationwide. She has recorded for film productions by the Smithsonian Institution and performed for the film *The Art of the Hyogushi*. Okamoto Sensei also played for the educational film *Pacific Bridge* in 1977. In the same year, she appeared on public television as a part of the music series “Music in Harmony,” produced by the National Symphony Orchestra. In addition, Okamoto Sensei has played for Prime Minister Nakasone and the present Emperor of Japan at the Japanese Embassy in 1987 in Washington DC.

This evening you will hear music from the distinct instrumental tradition of gamelan angklung. Gamelan angklung is traditionally used for cremation rituals. The instruments are tuned to a five-tone slendro scale, although most ensembles actually use a four-tone mode of the five-tone scale. Gamelan angklung instruments only contain one octave, whereas many of the instruments in gong kebyar span multiple octaves of its pentatonic scale. Also, the instruments are considerably smaller. Balinese composers have created new compositions for gamelan angklung, often featuring dance.

Originally from Tabanan, Bali, I Nyoman Suadin, a musician, composer, dancer, puppeteer and teacher, discovered music and dance as a young child by watching his father participate in the village gamelan and by playing in a children’s gamelan. He later received formal training at KOKAR, the National High School for the Performing Arts, in Denpasar, Bali. Suadin has traveled throughout the United States and performed with gamelan ensembles since 1988. In addition to directing the University of Maryland ensemble, Suadin teaches Balinese gamelan at the Eastman School of Music and Swarthmore College. He is also the founder and artistic director of Gamelan Mitra Kusuma in Mount Rainier, Maryland.
Japanese Shamisen Chamber Music with Koto and Shakuhachi
— Ikuta School
Location: Michelle Smith Performing Arts Library — Paged Collections
Call Number: M1812. J26 (LP recording)
The ambience created by the stringed koto and shamisen and the end-blown
Japanese bamboo flute, the shakuhachi, invokes a tranquil and unearthly
ambience, far removed from the modern world. Become transported to
a state of pure relaxation by this recording, which features Japanese
chamber music performed on traditional instruments.

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and other resources relating to the performers, pieces,
composers and themes of this program, please visit us
at www.lib.umd.edu/mspal/mspal-previews.