An Evening of Balinese Music and Dance

UMD Gamelan Saraswati
| Nyoman Suadin, director

Wednesday, May 8, 2013. 8PM
Ina & Jack Kay Theatre

Program

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A gamelan is a musical ensemble from Indonesia, typically from the islands of Bali or Java. The word Gamelan (pronounced gah-meh-lan) comes from the Javanese word “gamel,” meaning “to strike” or “to play.”

Gamelan Gong Kebyar, the most common ensemble in modern Bali, appeared in the early 1900s. It is characterized by great contrasts of timbre (sound quality), tempo (speed) and dynamics (volume). Kebyar literally means “to burst open,” such as a flower in sudden bloom.

In Bali, dance is always closely connected to the music. Many gamelan performances include dance as a major component, but also because the details of choreography and dance gesture are tightly synchronized with the music’s accents and textures. The traditions evolved primarily in the context of the highly ornate, multi-faceted ceremonies of Balinese Hindu culture. In these dances, the performance is seen as an offering to the Hindu deities, who are invited down from the heavens to visit the temples during temple anniversaries and other auspicious ritual occasions. 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.

Ensemble Members

UMD Gamelan Saraswati
Manjur Ahmed, Ben Blochsom, Chrysalis Borja, William Bovender, Young Hyun Chun, Matthew Ellis, Seth Glabman, Jooyoung Hong, Jeongwook Lee, Justin Lee, Lauren Lee, Yun Jae Lee, Savannah Mason, Anna Marx, Shaiyon Merkel, Emily Milanak, Alice Rogers, Nu Ri Seo, Nazniel Shah, Nicole Shyung, Noah Smith, Andrew So, Jennie Terman, William Wadsworth
The **UMD Gamelan Saraswati** is part of the Musicology and Ethnomusicology Division of the School of Music and includes students from the School of Music and other departments of UMD. The gong kebyar style instruments, which were acquired in 2001, 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.

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. He has traveled throughout the United States and performed with gamelan ensembles since 1988. In addition to directing the University of Maryland ensemble, he teaches at Eastman School of Music and Swarthmore College. He is also the founder and artistic director of Gamelan Mitra Kasuma.