TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE

Balinese Performing Arts

for Your Students SPRING 2016







UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I
theatre + dance

theater for young audiences asian theatre program

In conjunction with the Asian Theatre Program's

Jan 22-31 BALINESE WAYANG LISTRIK 2016 Large-screen Shadow Puppet Theatre

Aloha educators!

Welcome, and Selamat Datana!

The **UH Mānoa Asian** Theatre Program and the Center for Southeast **Asian Studies** are pleased to bring Balinese performing arts to the children and youth of Hawai'i!

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This educational resource guide includes materials and resources to introduce you and your students to traditional and contemporary Balinese performing arts.

This resource guide is also downloadable on our website, along with updates on the production, outreach events, educational behindthe-scene videos and other ways to connect.

www.cseashawaii.org/ programs/performance/ wayang-listrik

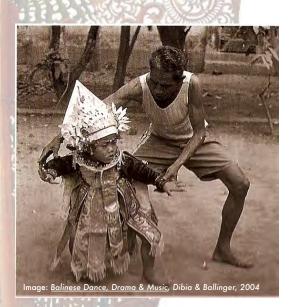
Information in this guide works best with our in-school "playshops," but can also be used as standalone material. It is not necessary to have seen the Kennedy Theatre Spring 2016 production of Balinese Wayang Listrik in

order to benefit from the material presented in this quide.

WHY BALINESE PERFORMING ARTS?

Bali is a small island in the island nation of Indonesia in Southeast Asia. Balinese music, dance, theatre and shadow puppetry are rich with history, culture and storytelling in ways that naturally invoke creativity in every child.

Most Balinese artists would have begun their creative endeavor very early in their lives, making Balinese performing arts readily accessible to children and youth of prime learning age. We are excited for you and your students to discover all that our program has to offer!



Guest artist Ketut Wirtawan when he was a young boy learning the baris dance from his grandfather, the famous I Nyoman Kakul

Background image: Heru S. Sudjarwo

CONTACT US:

For questions on outreach activities and the Kennedy Theatre show, please contact Margot Fitzsimmons, coordinator for the Theatre for Young Audiences Office, at (808) 956-2591 and ktyouth@hawaii.edu.

*** INCLUDES ACTIVITY ***



ABOUT BALI (and connections to Hawai'i!)

- Bali is a small island in the eastern part of Indonesia, a country in Southeast Asia.
- Indonesia is a huge country with about 17,000 islands, 6,000 of which are inhabited, with different ethnic groups and languages.
- Bali is one of the smaller islands, just east of Java, and has about 4.2 million people.
- Eighty-five percent of the people in Bali are Balinese Hindu (though it's quite different from Hinduism in India).
- Most Balinese are bilingual, speaking both Indonesian and Balinese.

DID YOU KNOW that on April 14, 2014, Bali and Hawai'i became sister islands? This makes sense because not only are the two places part of the Asia Pacific region, they are both beautiful islands with rich performing art traditions. What is really cool is that they also share linguistic similarities despite being thousands of miles away. The Hawaiian and Balinese/Indonesian languages descend from a common ancestral speech community.

**Check out these Indonesian, Balinese and Hawaiian words that sound very similar

to each other! Try them out loud with your

students! **

ENGLISH HAWAIIAN BALINESE (B) / INDONESIAN (I)

Fish	ľa	Ikan (I)
Eye	Maka	Mata (B/I)
Rooster/Bird	Manu	Manuk (B)
Coconut	Niu	Nyuh (B)
Water	Wai	Yeh/Air (B/I)
Ме	Α'υ	Aku (I)
Flower	Pua	Bunga (I)
Come/Let's	Mai	Mai (B)
Body hair	Hulu	Bulu (B/I)
Leaf	Lau	Daun (B/I)
Fruit	Hua	Buah (B/I)
Root	A'a	Akah/Akar (B/I)
Three	Kolu	Telu (B)

About Balinese Performing Arts



Life, ritual and performance

Balinese performing arts are a smorgasbord of visual, tactile and auditory richness. Bali is special because of the fluid intersection between spiritual life and creative endeavor. Music, dance and theatre are learned and performed for the divine as well as the human audience. Stories are told both to teach the young about their tradition at the same time that it is a favorite activity enjoyed by all. Children are exposed to these art forms from a very early age through temple ceremonies and other community activities that happen on a regular basis.



A young Balinese girl waits for the start of a ceremony involving dance during the celebration of *Nyepi* in Bali, a day of silence, which also marks the new year on the Balinese lunar-based saka calendar.

Made Sidia, a well-known Balinese artist, greets students at a school outreach event during his 2010 East-West Center residency. He is wearing the topeng tua mask depicting an old man.

Desa, kala, patra -Place, time, circumstance

A pretty special thing about Balinese performing arts is also its rootedness in Balinese religious and spiritual philosophy. One of the prevalent philosophies is that of *desa, kala, patra* or place, time, context. Embracing this philosophy motivates one to consider whether an action suits the particular place, time and context that he or she is in. This extends to the performing arts as well. Instead of rendering the arts rigid and "regimented" however, this philosophy may actually help explain why every performance is unique and in some cases, improvisatory in nature and essence. For example, while the "main" story is an episode from the Ramayana, it is not unusual for a performance to incorporate social commentary on current events or the latest gadget trends!

Telling stories through sound, movement, masks and puppets

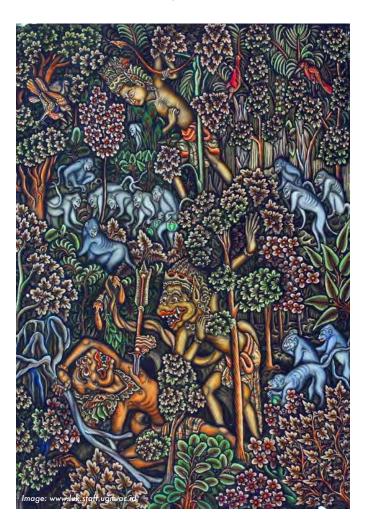
At the core of the craft, as is the case generally in Balinese performing arts, is learning how to breathe life into an object (including one's own body!) and tell a story or depict a character in a compelling, entertaining and almost other-worldly way.

Multiple sources of stories

The different Balinese art forms draw from many sources of stories. The main ones are native and specific to Bali and nearby Java - old epic poetry recounting tales of grandeur of old Javanese kingdoms such as the *Panji* cycle, as well as local adaptations of the Indian *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*.

Like the *Odyssey* and other old epic poems, the *Ramayana*, a story approximately 2,400 years old, is about a journey of external and internal struggle, with a rich serving of kings and queens, advisers and seers, as well as magical beings like the elusive golden deer, the white monkey king and scary giant ogres.

The Indian *Ramayana* epic, along with the *Mahabharata*, have had a great influence on Balinese arts



An intricate painting of an episode from the Ramayana, portraying the battle of Sugriwa and Subali born out of an unfortunate misunderstanding

and culture for centuries. These texts are so long that performances, whether through dance, theatre or puppetry, usually only depict a particular shorter episode rather than the entire text.



A mosaic of one of the episodes from Homer's Odyssey depicting Odysseus and his men approaching the island of the sirens

Character types in Balinese performance

Across the different genres of performance, character types in the stories or sketches being performed can roughly be divided into strong (*keras*) and refined (*alus*). And then there are the clown characters, who are typically also narrators in Balinese performance, able to translate from the ancient literary language of *kawi* (old Balinese/Javanese) to present-day Balinese, acting as a conduit between the world of the characters and that of the audience.

"At the core of the craft, as is the case generally in Balinese performing arts, is learning how to breathe life into an object (including one's own body!) and tell a story or depict a character in a compelling, entertaining and almost other-worldly way." Balinese gamelan music culture and education are multitudinous and dynamic. In general the art form can be described as different kinds of ensembles of percussion-based traditional instruments made up of metallophones, kettle-gongs, hanging gongs and drums. But even this mouthful description does little justice to the variety and recent developments in approaches to the creation of sound and music both in and outside of Bali using the instruments. For example, the traditional gamelan jegog from Jembrana in west Bali is made up of vibraphone-like bamboo-based rather than metal-based instruments. Not to mention different scales being used, such as the popular pentatonic gamelan gong kebyar, the 4-tone angklung, and the more recent 7-tone gamelan semaradana.

But perhaps most importantly is the concept of teamwork - gamelan is a group effort, both in terms of the socialization of its practice and the actual physical creation of sound and is therefore a wonderful tool for learning. A perceived melody or rhythm to the audience can in fact be produced by all twenty or so musicians - every part is important. Almost every instrument is part of a pair, played by two different people, tuned to slightly different frequencies to create the characteristic ngumbang-ngisep or shimmering sound of gamelan due to wave interference. The rich sound of gamelan melodies and rhythms also come from the concept of kotekan, which is where two interlocking melodies, played by two different people, create one rich melody and rhythm. Combine this with layers of kotekan in a composition, you have what truly is an ensemble. This means that it is critical that rehearsals are fully attended, and overzealous individualistic personalities rarely make it very far in an ensemble.

Balinese dance is characterized by precise movements, both slow and sudden, as well as bold and refined. Dances are performed as offerings to the spirit world. Sometimes a dance is a re-enacment of a scene from a story. Sometimes they aren't stories, but character sketches. The movements themselves are abstract, and generally do not literally "act



A youth group from Ubung, Denpasar at a gender festival (gender is a metallophone with resonators, typically used in traditional shadow puppet performances)

Balinese Gamelan MUSIC and DANCE



Boys and girls learning the baris warrior dance together by following their teacher

out" the actions in a story, nor simply mime the mannerisms of the character.

Much of the movement phrases are abstract interpretations of the natural and social environment. For example, one movement in Balinese dance called nyegut is used during heightened moments and faster tempo during which the eyes dart to the side, center, down, and center again, repeatedly. This is inspired by the veins of a leaf - there's the straight line down the middle and the tributary veins coming off of the main vein going sideways. But when the dancer does this move in the legong dance, for example, she isn't trying to portray a leaf - instead she's embodying the heightened energy in the music that changed suddenly from slow to fast. The leaf is simply an inspiration. This is what is meant by abstraction. Another dance phrase is inspired by how a gecko scutters away on water called lasan megat yeh, which translates into the dancer moving side-toside, isolating her neck and shaking her head while her arms cross her body over her chest, and her feet tiptoe while shuffling sideways.

FUN FACT: In December 2015, nine traditional Balinese dances were officially recognized as part of UNESCO's list of humanity's intangible cultural heritage.

*** INCLUDES ACTIVITY ***

Wayang: SHADOW Puppet Theatre

Balinese shadow puppetry consists of leather puppets (wayang kulit) on sticks, a source of light (traditionally an oil lamp called blencong or damar), and a screen (kelir) on which the shadow is cast.

Puppets not in use would be stuck into the *gedebong*, traditionally the trunk of a banana tree. The *gamelan* ensemble that usually accompanies a traditional wayang kulit performance is called the *gamelan gender wayang*. The puppeteer, called the *dalang* is a true master artist, playing the role of puppeteer, actor, dancer, musician and conductor all at the same time. He also must have deep knowledge of the old Balinese and Hindu texts from which wayang stories are derived.

In Balinese wayang kulit there are two major kinds of characters/puppets. The "clown" narrator puppets, and the story character puppets (kings, angels, ogres, princesses etc).

(continued on the next page)

STEP 1

FIND/MAKE A SCREEN

You and your class can easily create a mini wayang kulit theatre from daily objects and materials. The screen can be white cloth, white paper or even the white wall!

STEP 2

MAKE THE PUPPETS

Have your students draw the shape of their character on a piece of stiff paper, and cut out the shape. You can also use the cut-outs in this guide (see pages 11-12). Tape a satay stick or chopstick to the back of the cut-out and you have a puppet!

MAKE YOUR OWN SHADOW PLAY!

STEP 3

SHINE SOME LIGHT

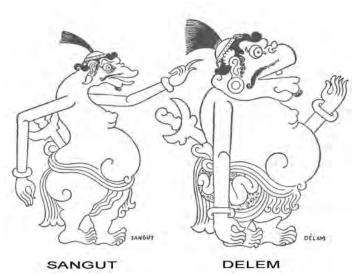
A strong-shining study lamp would do. Have it shine from behind the puppet, so that the shadow is cast onto the screen. While it would be a fire hazard to use an actual oil lamp, the flickering nature of an open flame is what gives life to a traditional wayang kulit shadow.

STEP 4

BE A DALANG!

The playfulness and spirit of joy in what the *dalang* does lies in all of us - when we first begin role-playing at an early age. Allow your students to call on this playfulness and joy, doing different voices and improvising as they go along.





But make no mistake, the four clown puppets whose names are Delem, Sangut, Merdah and Twalen are revered puppets and are particularly spiritually potent. They also demonstrate the absence of the "fourth wall" in Balinese theatre: the puppets in a wayang kulit performance interact with the audience in the middle of the story being told. In fact, anachronisms are part of wayang kulit! Your students can practice switching between "narrator" puppet and "character" puppet voices. Refined character types such as gods and goddesses, ministers and knights, angels and mystical creatures make up another group of puppets. You will notice that unlike the four clown-narrator puppets, these puppets do not have movable mouthpieces. They usually speak in high Balinese, with the clown-characters doing the translating for the audience.

In addition to the clown-narrators, refined royalty and mystical creatures, there are numerous other puppet character types. The most intricate and grand ones tend to actually be the demons, ogres and giants. But a wayang kulit performance will never be complete without the most important puppet of all, the kayonan or the tree of life. Have fun making your Balinese shadow puppets!

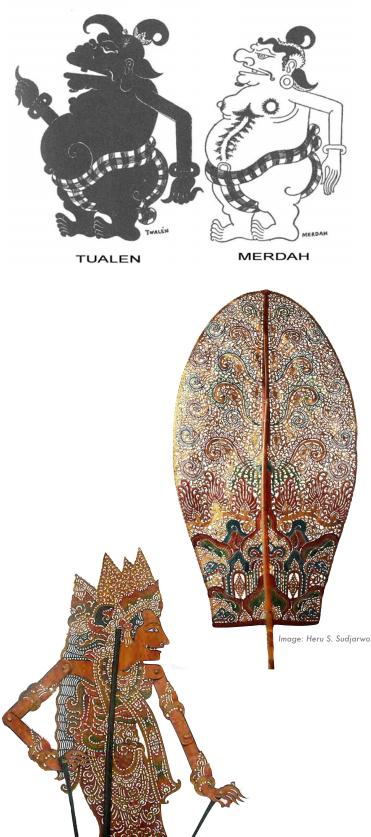


Image: Beobali on flickr

WHAT IS "WAYANG LISTRIK"?

"Listrik" is the Indonesian word for "electric" or "electricity" referring to the use of electric light projections on large screens, which is a recent development in shadow puppetry in Bali that began approximately in the late 1980s. Well-known dalangs like Ketut Kodi and Made Sidia (who have been to Hawai'i before!) along with filmmaker-puppetter Larry Reed experimented with this new media for wayang. Reed and Sidia further developed this form into what is referred to today as wayang listrik, combining large screens, paintings, film, complex lighting, dancers and dance-puppeteers with puppet shadow masks. The Asian Theatre Program's Balinese Wayang Listrik production incorporates elements borrowed and modified from existing Balinese performing art forms: theatre, music, dance, and shadow puppetry.

QUICK GUIDE: SOME BALINESE PERFORMING ART FORMS

1. Gamelan music

Bali, like many other Southeast Asian communities, has its own gamelan culture. A gamelan is an orchestra of metallophones, gongs, and drums. Different gamelan ensemble types could have as few as two instruments to as many as over twenty instruments.

2. Pelegongan and kebyar dances

Pelegongan is a classical refined female form, usually the first form that young girls learn and perfect throughout their dancing lives. The explosive kebyar form began to take root in the early 20th century; its first piece, Kebyar Legong was choreographed to the gamelan gong kebyar orchestra in 1915 by Pan Wandres.

3. Topeng or masked dance-drama

Topeng dance always uses a variety of masks, depending on the character being performed, of which there are generally four kinds: clowns/narrators, refined royalty, stronger aristocrats, and buffoon-like villains. Many topeng performances are commissioned in conjunction with a temple ritual.

4. Gambuh and arja dance-dramas

Bali also has a complex sung and spoken dance-drama culture embodied in the artistically challenging classical form of gambuh, dating as far back as the 14th century, as well as arja, a more recent development in the 19th century.

5. Wayang kulit or shadow puppetry

"Wayang" refers to "shadows" while "kulit" means "leather", from which Balinese shadow puppets are made. A traditional night-time performance would have an oil lamp (blencong or damar) as the light source, with the shadow cast on a white cloth screen (kelir). Audience members, however, may watch from either side of the screen. And of course, the most important person is none other than the dalang - the shadow puppeteer.



Dewi Tara and the monkey kings



Monkey kings Sugriwa and Subali in battle - view from behind the screen. Actors are wearing puppet shadow masks.



Monkey kings Sugriwa and Subali in battle - view from the audience side of the screen



The actor-dancer-puppeteers in front of the screen, this time with traditional Balinese half-face masks

POSSIBLE PRE-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Do you know any mythological adventure stories? Name a few if you know them.
- 2. What characterizes these adventure stories? What is the story usually about?
- 3. What are some similarities and differences between characters in Greek/Roman mythology and Hindu mythology?
- 4. Have you ever had a fight with your sibling or friend over a misunderstanding? Misunderstandings are a source of some of the most classic stories. Think of Romeo & Juliet's confusion over fake and real death, or Cervantes' Don Quixote who thinks he's a gallant hero fighting a giant (which is actually a windmill).
- 5. What do you think these seemingly fantastical or silly stories are trying to teach us?

POSSIBLE POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. What do you notice is different about Balinese shadow puppet theatre and other kinds of theatre or drama that you've watched before?
- 2. You may notice that sometimes the characters spoke in English, and sometimes in Indonesian or Balinese. Were you still able to follow the story? How did you do this?
- 3. What do you think about the music that accompanied the story? What kinds of instruments do you think they are? What does the music sound like to you?
- 4. What was the story about on the surface, and what do you think it's really about?
- 5. Which character(s) did you like, and which character(s) did you not like? Explain why.

MAKE A DANCE!

- Ask your students to think about things in nature or daily activities. For example, "a cat pouncing" or "flowers in a lei"... anything!
- For younger students, you can also make this a vocabulary exercise, so instead of a full phrase, it can just be a word such as "cat" or "lei".
- You can also have each student pick a phrase/word out of a hat and make his/her dance move from that phrase/word.
- The key here is to let them be creative and have fun with it so that they're not worried about trying to "reproduce" something exactly, but instead to imbue the movement with their own sense of aesthetic and just use the object, animal or action as initial inspiration.

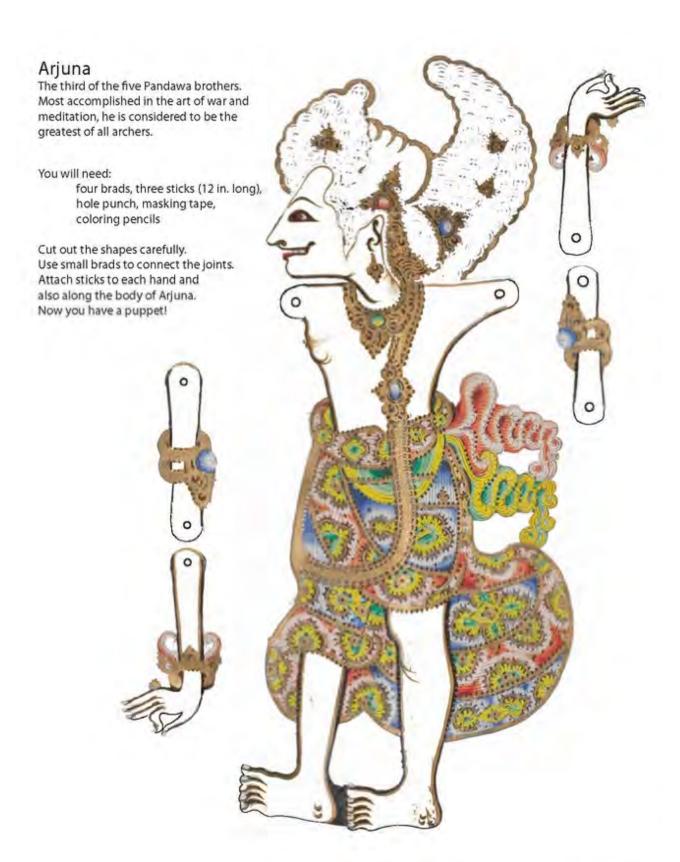
 (Remember the concept of "abstraction" from page 6.)
- It doesn't have to be long, maybe just 4 single movements strung together into one short dance "word" or "phrase" on 4 counts.
- The students can be in groups of 2 or 3. First each member shows the others in their group their dance while their friends count the steps for them (it helps!).
- Then, if they're up for some dance collaboration, each group can come up with a longer dance which is like a "sentence" made of "words" or "phrases".

HAVE FUN!

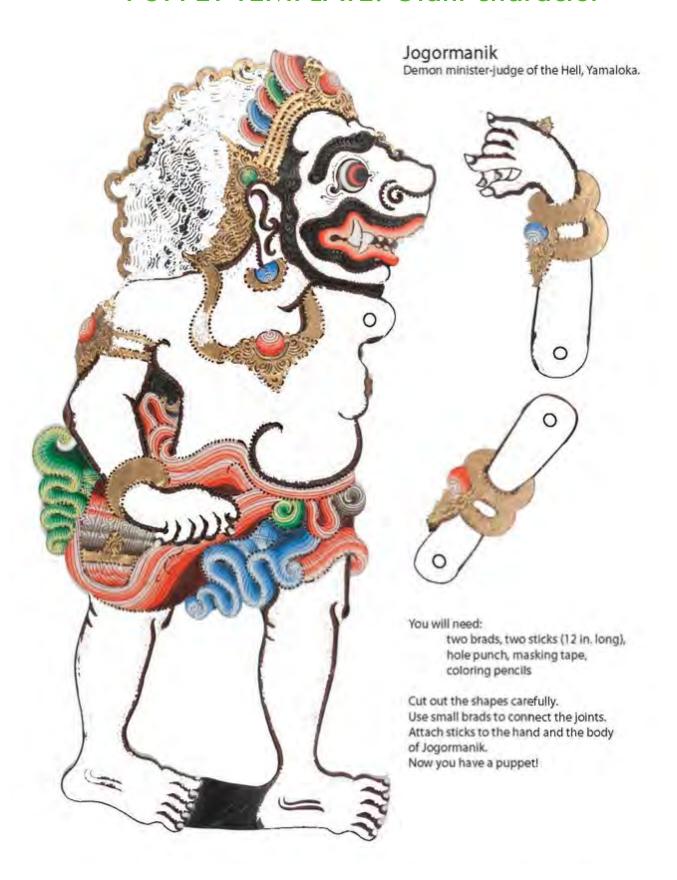
mage: www.blog.teacollection.com

FYI A video recording of our Spring 2016 Balinese Wayang Listrik Kennedy Theatre show (January 22 - 31, 2016) and behind-the-scenes documentary will be streamed online at https://vimeo.com/uhcseas

PUPPET TEMPLATE: Refined character



PUPPET TEMPLATE: Giant character



GUEST ARTISTS



Ketut Wirtawan has trained extensively in wayang kulit and gambuh, one of Bali's most difficult and complicated dance-drama forms. He is not only a powerful dancer, but is an accomplished musician, vocalist, shadow puppeteer, painter, and director. He has taken over the spiritual and artistic responsibilities of his late father, the revered Ketut Kantor and his legendary grandfather Nyoman Kakul, carrying on the tradition of one of Bali's most important artistic lines. Wirtawan is a

sought after dalang (puppeteer) for both traditional and modern wayang kulit performances, and one of Bali's most dedicated and serious artists, who is able to perform work that even many of Bali's most acclaimed artists cannot. He has toured to Austria, Germany, France, Switzerland, India, Japan, Taiwan and Singapore.

Made Moja is a prominent Balinese painter, skilled in the traditional ink and watercolor technique of his native village of Batuan. The compositions are often very detailed and complex, drawing from Hindu mythology, traditional village life, and nature. Moja's Bay Area exhibitions have included Stanford Art Spaces, the San Francisco Commonwealth Club, Somarts Gallery, and Pro Arts. His work has also been shown internationally and featured in numerous books on the art and culture of Bali. Since coming to



the US, Moja has branched out artistically. In addition to experimenting with new themes in his painting, he has become a primary dancer with Gamelan Sekar Jaya, an acclaimed Balinese orchestra and dance group.



Made Widana holds a Bachelor of Arts in Balinese Traditional Music from the Indonesian Arts Institute in Denpasar, Bali. He is a professional musician, dancer, and composer. When in Bali, Widana teaches traditional gamelan music in villages throughout the island and at several

reputable music and dance studios. As a founding member and musician in the Bali-based world-renowned performing arts ensemble, Çudamani, Widana has participated in tours across the U.S., Japan, and in Europe. He has previously been in residence at the University of

Hawai'i between 2009 and 2013, during which time he taught the UH Balinese Gamelan Ensemble. He has also participated in numerous community outreach programs in the Hawaiian islands under the sponsorship of the East-West Center Arts Program, the Mayor's Office of Culture and the Arts, and the UH-Mānoa Outreach Statewide Cultural Extension Program.

PRODUCERS



Dr. Kirstin Pauka is a professor of Asian theatre at UH Mānoa and production director for the Wayang Listrik project. Since 2001, she has produced and directed several Asian Theatre training-and-production shows working with guest artists and teachers from Indonesia and the Philippines. For the 2016 theatrical performance, she is collaborating with Balinese colleagues to oversee student training and logistics before directing the final production. Dr. Pauka is also the director of the

Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at UH Mānoa and is an active member in the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble. She has also been a member-at-large of the Hawai'i Gamelan Society for two years.

Annie Reynolds

studied traditional performing arts at the Indonesian Arts Institute in Denpasar, Bali in 2004–2005, and has since taken regular trips to Bali to undertake intensive study of Balinese music and dance. While in Bali, her primary focus was studying gender wayang which is the music of the



traditional shadow theatre. She was also an active musician performing accompaniment for various dalang (puppeteers), and took part in many local ceremonial performances, and in new collaborative projects with Balinese artists. In 2009, she assisted in reestablishing the UHM Balinese Gamelan Ensemble, and she is its assistant director. As an Asian Theatre PhD student with a focus on Balinese performing arts, she spent 2013-14 in Bali conducting dissertation research and fieldwork on Balinese legong dance.

The ASIAN THEATRE PROGRAM at UH Mānoa is internationally recognized as the leading center for Asian theatre study and research in the United States. It has attained this status by providing students and scholars with an unprecedented focus on Asian contexts, the development of theatrical skills, and on-going research opportunities for students situated domestically and abroad. Each year, celebrated Asian artists and teachers provide intensive training in a selected form of Asian performance that culminates in an authentically staged, English language production.

SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS













SPECIAL THANKS TO:

UH Mānoa Chancellor's Fund for Asian Theatre

UH Mānoa Music Department

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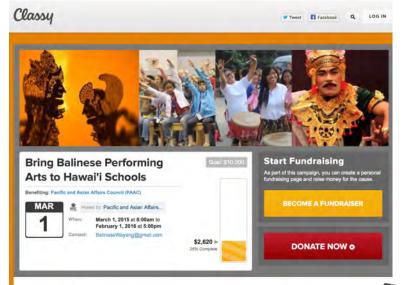
Our advisors Larry Reed, I Made Sidia and I Made Redha

Instrument shipment support, Luis Gamarra at Bali Aga Lifestyle

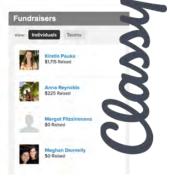


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can help raise funds to bring the outreach program to more schools – check out the crowd-funding page of our community partner PAAC (Pacific & Asian Affairs Council) on the website Classy.org.







MAHALO TO OUR INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTERS VIA CLASSY.ORG!

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Susan Yuen