



Performing Indonesia

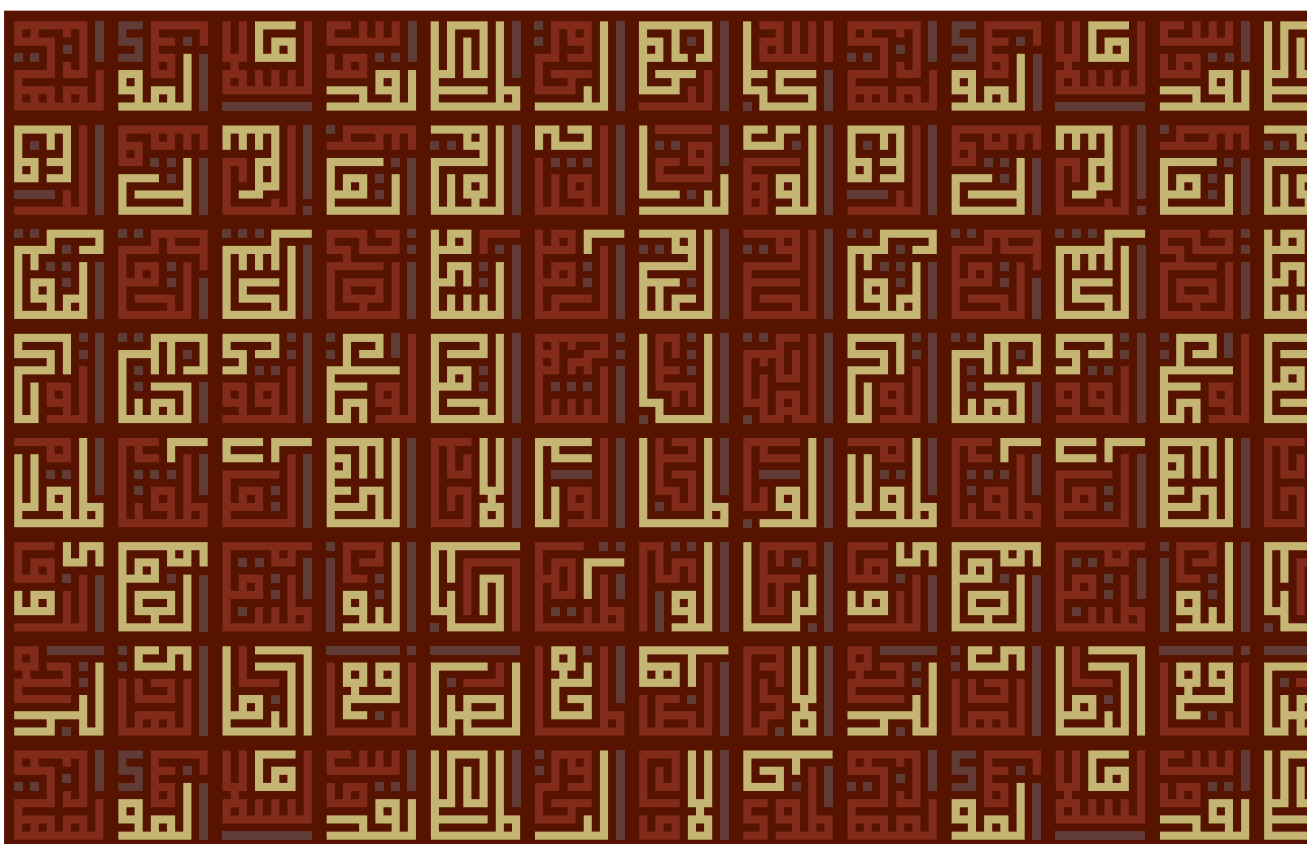
ISLAMIC INTERSECTIONS

September 10–November 19, 2016

Part II: November Programs

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design and Betts Theatre, George Washington University

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian



A joint presentation of the Freer and Sackler Galleries (Smithsonian) and the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Washington, DC, in cooperation with George Washington University

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

Julian Raby, The Dame Jillian Sackler Director
of the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and the Freer Gallery of Art
Nancy Micklewright, Head of Public and Scholarly Engagement
Grace Murray, Head of Public Programs
Michael Wilpers, Manager of Performing Arts
Nancy Eickel, Editor

Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia

Budi Bowoleksono, Ambassador
Ismunandar, Education and Cultural Attaché

George Washington University

Sanjit Sethi, Director, Corcoran School of the Arts and Design
Robert P. Baker, Deputy Chair, Department of Music
Jonathan Duek, ethnomusicologist and Deputy Director,
Writing in the Disciplines Program

Please silence cell phones and refrain from using illuminated displays during programs. Unauthorized photography and recording of performances are prohibited. Programs are subject to change. For more information on Freer|Sackler exhibitions, collections, and programs, visit asia.si.edu.

Performing Indonesia

ISLAMIC INTERSECTIONS | September 10–November 19, 2016

Schedule

Part I: September–October Programs

FASHION SHOW

High Fashion for Muslim Wear: New Designs from Java

Saturday, September 10, 7:30 pm

6 pm: Lecture

Zapin dance

Reception follows fashion show

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, atrium

PERFORMANCE

Strings Meet Gamelan: Chamber Music from Indonesia

Momenta Quartet and Gamelan Raga Kusuma, with

Ubiet and Tony Arnold, vocals

Thursday, September 22, 7:30 pm

George Washington University, Betts Theatre

PERFORMANCE

Music from Sulawesi and West Java

Harmony (Indonesia) and House of Angklung (USA)

Saturday, October 22, 7:30 pm

6 pm: Complimentary Indonesian snacks and beverages

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, atrium

Part II: November Programs

LECTURE-DEMONSTRATION

The Art of Qur'anic Recitation

Hajjah Maria Ulfah, reciter; Anne Rasmussen, moderator

Saturday, November 5, 2 pm

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design,

Hammer Auditorium

WORKSHOP

Martial Arts from Sumatra: *Pencak Silat*

Led by Wona Sumantri, Silat Martial Arts Academy

Saturday, November 5, 3:30 pm

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, atrium

LECTURES

Islam and the Performing Arts in Indonesia

Wednesday, November 9, 7:30 pm

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, Hammer Auditorium

PERFORMANCE

Javanese Shadow-puppet Play: Bima's Quest for Enlightenment

Sumarsam, *dhalang* (puppeteer), accompanied by the

Javanese Court Gamelan Ensemble of the Embassy of

Indonesia, with guest musicians from the Society for

Ethnomusicology

Thursday, November 10, 7:30 pm

Indonesian refreshments available during the performance

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, atrium

FAMILY WORKSHOP

Javanese Puppet-painting for Families

Sunday, November 13, 11 am–1 pm and 2–4 pm

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, ImaginAsia classroom

PERFORMANCE

Hamsa: Five Tales, for Balinese gamelan, organ, guitar, video, and narrator

Lightbulb Ensemble and guest artists

Saturday, November 19, 7:30 pm

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, Hammer Auditorium

Free tickets or reservations are required for all events—except for the Qur'anic recitation on November 5 and the lectures on November 9—and may be ordered online at asia.si.edu/events.

Performing Indonesia: Islamic Intersections is presented by the Freer and Sackler Galleries in partnership with George Washington University and the Embassy of Indonesia through Rumah Budaya Indonesia. The festival received Federal support from the Asian Pacific American Initiatives Pool, administered by the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center. Additional funding provided by the American-Indonesian Cultural and Educational Foundation and Badan Ekonomi Kreatif Indonesia.

Festival locations in Washington, DC (All events are free of charge and open to the public.)

Corcoran School of the Arts and Design
500 17th Street, NW
Metro: Farragut North, Farragut West

Betts Theatre
George Washington University
800 21st Street, NW
Metro: Foggy Bottom, Farragut West

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery
1050 Independence Avenue, SW
Metro: Smithsonian

Introduction

As the Smithsonian's national museum of Asian art, the Freer and Sackler Galleries seek to advance public knowledge about the arts and cultures of Asia through exhibitions, publications, research, education, and programs. The two museums are home to renowned Asian art collections that range from ancient objects of the prehistoric world to contemporary works by today's artists. We provide visitors with inspiring, in-depth experiences through our collections, special exhibitions, and an array of public programs, including films, concerts, lectures, panel discussions, hands-on activities, and more.

Now in its third iteration, Performing Indonesia is the signature Freer|Sackler program of Indonesian arts. Thanks to the generous support and coordination from the Embassy of Indonesia, these festivals feature Indonesian musicians, dancers, and other artists who travel from Southeast Asia or live in the United States, as well as Westerners who help perpetuate the vibrant performance traditions of the region.

To expand the reach of this festival, we have recently launched a media-rich online resource on Indonesian performing arts. Taking full advantage of the digital platform, this publication features dozens of videos, audio recordings, photos, and music notations. Essays by ethnomusicologists and other experts expand on the lectures given at our Performing Indonesia festival in 2013. We invite you to explore this new feature at asia.si.edu/research.

While Southeast Asia has long been a strength of our collections and exhibitions, the performing arts of Indonesia are the special focus of these festivals. We hope you enjoy many of the programs offered this year.

Welcome



Selamat datang! On behalf of the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, the Indonesian community in the metropolitan Washington area, and the Indonesian diaspora across the United States, I am pleased to welcome you to the third Performing Indonesia festival.

This year's theme is Performing Indonesia: Islamic Intersections. It is quite different from previous years in that it highlights the powerful relationship between the Islamic faith and Indonesia's national, regional, and local cultures. Islam and Indonesian culture influence each other in many ways and impact the daily lives of more than 240 million people who come from immensely diverse backgrounds. The performances, workshops, and lectures you will experience at this festival underscore the profound and dynamic bond between Indonesian culture and the Muslim faith, which is the result of a long history and an ongoing process of peaceful acculturation.

A traditional shadow-puppet (*wayang*) performance, the *tilawah Qur'an* (the practice of reciting verses from the Qur'an), the assimilation of fashion and religion, a concert featuring an unusual fusion of string and gamelan instruments to perform music composed by Tony Prabowo and Gde Yudane, and a *kolintang* (xylophone) group featuring singers from Manado—a majority-Christian province in Indonesia—who sing traditionally Muslim songs are just a few examples of what awaits you at this year's festival.

Our nation's motto, *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*, embraces the same meaning as *E pluribus unum*: "Out of many, one." As the largest Muslim population in the world, Indonesia continues to address one of the most pressing challenges of our time: the threat of religious and violent extremism. I hope Performing Indonesia 2016 not only allows you to discover the unique bond between Islam and Indonesian culture, but it also encourages you to see Islam in Indonesia as a religion of peace and tolerance. It is a *rahmatan lil alamin*—a blessing for all humankind.

Budi Bowoleksono
Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to the United States of America
Washington, DC
September 2016



It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to our third Performing Indonesia festival at the Freer and Sackler Galleries, produced in partnership with the Embassy of Indonesia. We began this venture in 2013 with a pan-Indonesian weekend filled with gamelan music and family programs. In 2014 the festival focused on the region of Sunda, West Java, and offered puppet theater (*wayang golek*), public workshops on gamelan and West Javanese dance, and a memorable outdoor performance by a 200-member *angklung* orchestra of local grade-school students. The melodious outpouring was fantastic!

This year we present Performing Indonesia: Islamic Intersections to complement our major fall exhibition, *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, on view at the Sackler Gallery from October 22, 2016, through February 20, 2017. Perhaps nowhere in the Muslim world are music, dance, and theater more closely integrated into a nation's religious life than in Indonesia. We are delighted to bring so many aspects of Indonesian performance, both sacred and secular, to Washington audiences. Numerous supporters and collaborators made this year's festival possible, including George Washington University, the Embassy of Indonesia through Rumah Budaya Indonesia, the Asian Pacific American Initiatives Pool administered by the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, and the American-Indonesian Cultural and Educational Foundation and Badan Ekonomi Kreatif Indonesia.

A special thanks is due to our friends in the Department of Music at George Washington University for arranging performance spaces at the Corcoran and Betts Theatre. (The Freer Gallery's Meyer Auditorium is currently closed for renovation.) If this year's festival sparks your curiosity about *gamelan* music or shadow puppetry, I invite you to explore the Galleries' new web feature, Performing Indonesia: Music, Dance, and Theater, at asia.si.edu. Featuring dozens of videos, audio samples, and photos, this enlightening resource extends the Performing Indonesia symposium that was hosted at the Freer and Sackler Galleries in 2013. With Performing Indonesia online, we can share the vibrancy of Indonesia's performing arts with you and with viewers around the world.

Thank you for joining us this year for Performing Indonesia. Enjoy the show!

Julian Raby
The Dame Jillian Sackler Director of the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery and the Freer Gallery of Art

The Art of Qur'anic Recitation

Saturday, November 5

2 pm

Corcoran School of
the Arts and Design,
Hammer Auditorium



Hajjah Maria Ulfah, reciter; Anne Rasmussen, moderator

Hajjah Maria Ulfah

Born in 1955 in Lamongan in the East Java province of Indonesia, Hajjah Maria Ulfah began intensive training in Qur'an recitation when she was in the first grade. She won her first recitation competition at the district level at the age of twelve, and six years later she won her first province-level championship. Maria Ulfah garnered major national acclaim in 1978 and 1980 when she took first place at the National Competition in Qur'anic Recitation in Jakarta. Her first-place win at the international competition in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, led to an invitation to recite on Jeddah Radio in Saudi Arabia. In 1981 she was invited as guest reciter for the international competitions in Kuwait and Malaysia. She graduated from the State Institute of Islamic Studies in Surabaya in 1977. Four years later she received a master's degree from the Institute for Qur'anic Studies in Jakarta.

Maria Ulfah has performed as a guest reciter around the world—throughout Europe and Indonesia and in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Brunei, Iran, Jordan, Libya, and Qatar—and she regularly serves as an official and judge at international competitions. In 1999 she was recorded by the Phonogrammarchiv at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. During President Suharto's era, she was invited to recite at the state palace and the national Istiqlal Mosque for the president and diplomatic visitors.

Since 1982 Maria Ulfah has been a key member of the faculty and administration at the Institut Ilmu al-Qur'an (the Institute for Qur'anic Studies), a women's college with a comprehensive course of studies in Qur'anic recitation, interpretation, jurisprudence, and education. She is the long-time head of the religious boarding school (*pondok pesantren*) Al-Mudhofar in Lamongan, East Java, and founder of the Pondok Pesantren Baitul Qurro in Ciputat, South Tangerang, near her home in the greater Jakarta area. This school attracts promising reciters from throughout Indonesia as well as from Malaysia, South Africa, Nigeria, and Japan. Many of Maria Ulfah's students have performed internationally at recitation competitions.

Her voice has been a model for professional and amateur reciters, both men and women, for several decades. Maria Ulfah first performed Qur'anic recitation on radio and television in 1977, and she released her first cassette recording in 1981. The recipient of the Gold Plate Record Award from Musica Studio in 1984, Maria Ulfah recorded the entire Qur'an in *murattal* style in 2005. In 2014 she and her students recorded a new method for learning recitation in the *mujawwad* style, which employs seven of the melodic modes (*maqamat*) of Arab music. A year later she began a project to record the entire Qur'an, with every *juz'* (part) recited in all seven modes.

Anne Rasmussen

A prolific writer and instructor, Anne K. Rasmussen is the author of *Women, the Recited Qur'an, and Islamic Music in Indonesia* (2010), which received the Alan Merriam Prize Honorable Mention for 2011. She co-edited, with David Harnish, *Divine Inspirations: Music and Islam in Indonesia* (2011). She also co-edited, with Kip Lornell, *The Music of Multicultural America: Performance, Community, and Identity in the United States*. Originally published in 1997, the second revised edition, with four new chapters and a new introduction, was published this year. She won the Jaap Kunst Prize in 2001 for the best journal article in the field of ethnomusicology. Rasmussen is professor of music and ethnomusicology at the College of William and Mary, and in 2014 she was named the William M. and Annie B. Bickers Professor of Middle Eastern Studies. She currently serves as president of the Society for Ethnomusicology.

The Recited Qur'an in Indonesian Daily Life and Culture

Anne Rasmussen

The Qur'an is known throughout the world as a written document that can be read and studied as a text, but its active manifestation in daily life—being recited and heard—struck me profoundly when I lived in Indonesia for more than two years in the 1990s and early 2000s. A primary goal of my ethnography, *Women, the Recited Qur'an, and Islamic Music in Indonesia*, was to illustrate the ways in which the recited Qur'an permeates the Indonesian soundscape and the ways in which Indonesians who are involved in the culture of recitation activate this performative experience.

My focus on women, from esteemed professionals to little girls, from serious university students to mature housewives, from rich to poor, highlights the prominence and public presence of women and girls in the business and culture of religion. This is an aspect of Indonesian Islam that is little known to many parts of the Muslim world, where women's participation is perhaps more circumscribed. This activist presence of women is a testament to the cultural specificity of religious ideology and practice. Religious ideas and practices—rather than being a set of universal principles that apply to anyone, anywhere, at any time—are assimilated and localized differently in a variety of national contexts and respond to political, economic, and forces both global and local in ways that are dynamic and creative.

In my ethnography (2010), I describe five contexts in which the practice, performance, experience, and appreciation of Qur'anic recitation characterize the rhythms of Indonesian daily life. First is a ritual event called *khatam al-Qur'an*, when the entire Qur'an is recited by thirty reciters (either men or women) who each read one *juz'* (part) simultaneously, accomplishing a collective performance of the entire text in less than an hour. The second context is found in Islamic boarding schools, or *pondok pesantren*, an institution for education, socialization, and communal living, where Qur'anic projects characterize the rhythms of daily life. Third is the college-level Institut Ilmu al-Qur'an (IIQ, Institute for Qur'anic Studies) in Jakarta, where women pursue a systematic learning of Qur'anic melodies derived from the Arab system of melodic modes (*maqam*, pl. *maqamat*).

The most talented among the students at IIQ are recruited to compete in regional, national, and even international competitions in Qur'anic recitation. To prepare for competition, these women (along with their peer male contestants) attend Training Centers (TC), week-long intensive workshops of private coaching with the best reciters from across the Indonesian archipelago. At the TC, I experienced the idiosyncratic teaching methods of champion reciters as they transmit virtuosic vocal stylings and techniques required to deliver a technically flawless and spiritually effective recitation in the course of performance at a competition. This is a fourth context for recitation.

Finally, the fifth context is the *haflah al-Qur'an*, literally, the Qur'an party (the term *haflah* is Arabic for party, usually involving some kind of performance). At a *haflah*, the Qur'an is performed for other reciters and for friends who are connoisseurs of recitation. Unlike the innumerable rituals during which the Qur'anic recitation is expected (such as weddings and the evening prayers held every night during Ramadan), the Qur'an is recited at a *haflah* for its own sake, with a purpose that is more aesthetic than ritual. It is at the *haflah* that the artistry of the reciter is unbridled and the effects of Qur'anic performance most artistically salient.

Reciters in Indonesia model their recitations after a handful of Egyptian reciters whose work has been widely recorded, disseminated, and broadcast throughout the Muslim world. Many of these reciters (such as the renowned Sheikh 'Abd al-Basit 'Abd al Samad) visited Indonesia to recite and teach, particularly after Indonesian independence in 1945, as the country gradually began to forge partnerships with other Muslim-majority nations. Although recitation has been practiced in Indonesia since Islam arrived with Arab traders and spread across the islands from the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, it was not until this influential post-independence period that the musical styles of Egyptian reciters were proactively copied and assimilated. This is particularly true for the use of Egyptian-Arab melodic modes, or *maqamat*; the

technical aspects in matters of *tajwid*; and innumerable aesthetic features, ranging from phrase length to tessitura and vocal timbre.

Contact with Egyptian reciters and with recordings of reciters and singers from the Arab world not only influenced Qur'anic recitation in Indonesia, but it also contributed to the development of a vast spectrum of *seni musik Islam*, or Islamic musical arts. From the mosque to the recording studio, the contexts for and contents of Islamic music in Indonesia constitute a vibrant stream of Indonesian culture as well as a dynamic and exciting aspect of global Islam. Taking its cue from the recitation of the Qur'an, many of these styles of music draw upon the thematic content of the Qur'an and the practical and artistic techniques of its recitation.

Dra. Hajjah Maria Ulfah works in a professional capacity in all of these contexts. She teaches students and groups of women across the street from her house in the religious boarding school (*pondok pesantren*) that she founded and directs. She is a faculty member and administrator at IIQ, the college for Qur'anic studies, where she teaches college students in classrooms equipped with the latest interactive audio technology (similar to facilities found in foreign language departments at American universities). As a coach, Maria Ulfah is in high demand, attending Training Centers throughout Indonesia and receiving students who are flown into Jakarta to train with her in her home. As a judge and member of local arrangements and program committees for recitation competitions (*musabaqoh tilawatil Qur'an*), Maria Ulfah is one of the most respected team members in regional, national, and international circles. And, finally, as a solo performer, her reputation is extraordinary, and her performances of the recited Qur'an are legendary.

I have had the privilege of knowing and working with Maria Ulfah since 1996 when I was invited to participate in her classes at IIQ. She and her colleagues opened their worlds to me, and I am honored to have traveled to numerous destinations with Maria Ulfah, including the United States, when she was invited in 1999 as the distinguished scholar of the Middle East Studies Association and to Harvard, Princeton, and Brown universities and to Boston College for lecture demonstrations and performances.

Anne K. Rasmussen
Professor of Music and Ethnomusicology
Bickers Professor of Middle Eastern Studies
The College of William and Mary

—Adapted from A. K. Rasmussen, *Women, the Recited Qur'an, and Islamic Music in Indonesia* (2010).

FURTHER READING

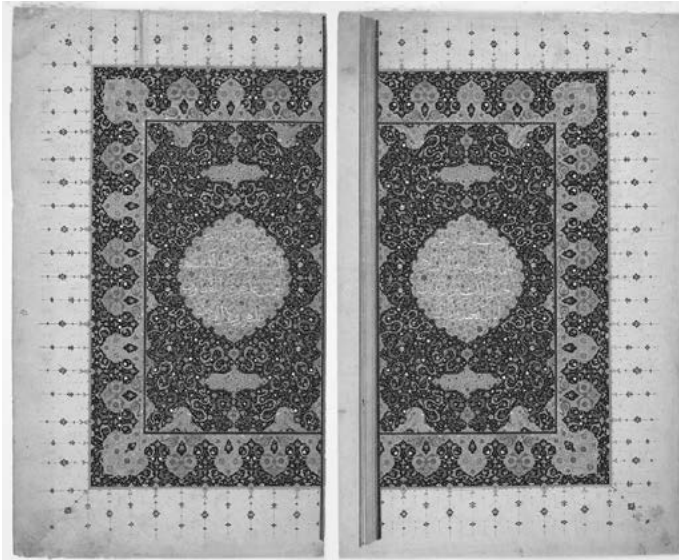
DeLong-Bas, Natana. *Notable Muslims: Muslim Builders of World Civilization and Culture*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006.

Esposito, John, and Ibrahim Kalin, eds. *The 500 Most Influential Muslims in the World*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, 2009.

Nelson, Kristina. *The Art of Reciting the Qur'an*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985.

Rasmussen, Anne K. *Women, the Recited Qur'an, and Islamic Musical Arts in Indonesia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2010.

Sells, Michael. *Approaching the Qur'an: The Early Revelations*. Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 1999.



Double page from a Qur'an
 Attributed to Ruzbihan
 Iran, Shiraz, mid-16th century
 Ink, gold, and color on paper
 S1986.82.1-2

Exhibition

This program on Qur'anic recitation is presented in conjunction with *The Art of the Qur'an: Treasures from the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts*, on view at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery through February 20, 2017. Koç Holding is the exhibition's principal sponsor, with additional support provided by Turkish Airlines, Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, Doğan Holding, and Hagop Kevorkian Fund. The exhibition is organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Turkey.

WORKSHOP

Martial Arts from Sumatra: *Pencak Silat*

Saturday, November 5
 3:30 pm

Corcoran School of
 the Arts and Design,
 atrium

Free reservations available
 at asia.si.edu/events
 (limit 100 participants)

Led by Wona Sumantri, Silat Martial Arts Academy

Wona Sumantri has been studying *pencak silat* for more than thirty years and comes from a family of *pencak silat* practitioners. His native roots are of Sundanese ethnicity of West Java. He learned *pencak silat* through his father, who trained in a traditional West Javanese *pencak silat* called *cimande*. His deep knowledge of *pencak silat* has earned him a place of high regard among practitioners of different styles in Indonesia. Over the years he has studied various *pencak silat* systems, including *panca sakti* (West Java), *cimande* (West Java), *harimau singgalang* (West Sumatra), and *al-azhar seni bela diri* (East Java).



Wona Sumatri

Islam and the Performing Arts in Indonesia

Wednesday, November 9

7:30 pm

Corcoran School of
the Arts and Design,
Hammer Auditorium

No tickets required

As religions travel around the world, they create transcultural practices and perspectives that are manifested in both spiritual and artistic domains. Oftentimes, cultural performances serve as one of the major venues for this blending of beliefs and practices. Indonesia's long process of Islamization in particular has given rise to rich variations in the content and context of cultural performances.

These lectures examine discourses of transculturalism, ritual practices, performing arts, and Islam in Indonesia, the nation with the largest Muslim population in the world. It addresses the history and diversity of Indonesian Muslim expression, while it unpacks Indonesia's modern sociocultural and religious development. This event is presented in cooperation with the annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology.

Moderator: Andy McGraw, University of Richmond

The Art of Qur'anic Recitation in Indonesia

Hajjah Maria Ulfah

Institute for Qur'anic Studies, Jakarta

Muslims believe the Qur'an is the literal word of God as revealed to Muhammad (peace be upon him) over a period of twenty-three years by the angel Gabriel, and they regard it as God's final revelation to humankind. The Qur'an consists of 114 chapters (*surat*, s. *surah*) with a total of 6,236 verses (*ayat*, s. *ayah*), divided into thirty approximately equal parts (*ajza'*, s. *juz'*) for convenience in reading, recitation, and memorization.

The art of the Qur'an can be divided in two forms: calligraphy—Qur'anic calligraphy is a highly honored art, much like Chinese calligraphy—and recitation. While it is possible to read the Qur'an silently, it is more commonly practiced aloud (even by an individual, alone). Reciting the Qur'an is a fine art in the Muslim world. All reciters, whether professionals or amateurs, children or adults, practice and perfect *tajwid*, the system that codifies the divine language and the accents of Qur'anic recitation in terms of melodic contour, rhythm, timbre, sectioning of the text, and phonetics.

In Indonesia as elsewhere in the Muslim world, reciters, both male and female, enjoy the kind of celebrity associated with pop music, opera, and sports stars in the West. Qur'an reciters are invited to recite at events such as Islamic celebrations (the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad or the descent of the Qur'an, for example), family events (weddings, engagements, birthdays, funerals), and public ceremonies (the opening of a new office building or a charity drive). In Indonesia, competitions in Qur'an recitation are hosted by many kinds of institutions (schools, universities, companies, government offices, and ministries) at many levels (from the village or neighborhood to the district, provincial, or national level). Contestants include boys and girls, adolescents, men and women, and blind people. Winners usually receive cash, certificates, trophies, or other prizes, and they often are given considerable recognition and respect.

The recited Qur'an, whether live or mediated, and whether delivered by an accomplished professional, a group of studious amateurs, or simple individuals practicing on their veranda, permeates the Indonesian soundscape. Regardless of religious affiliation or practice, people in Indonesia, both citizens and visitors from all walks of life, are always invited to "tune in" to the beautiful and auspicious sounds of the recited Qur'an.

See page 4 for Maria Ulfah's profile.



Ki Kasidi Hadiprayitno performs as *dalang* (puppeteer) at the Sackler Gallery in 2013.

Javanese Wayang and Islam in Dialogue

Sumarsam

Wesleyan University

The Islamization of Indonesia in the fifteenth century was a turning point in the development of Javanese shadow-puppet play (*wayang*). As Islam had to encounter Java-Hindu worldviews within which *wayang* had been cultivated, Javanese people had to reposition and rearticulate their socio-religious life and cultural expression, bringing about a Java/Hindu-Islam hybrid tradition. Javanese believe deeply that Islamic saints, especially Sunan Kalijaga, were responsible for the development of *wayang* and its use to spread the new religion. This belief connotes a powerful symbolic significance of the impact of Islam on the development of *wayang*. Past and present dialogs between *wayang* and Islam can be examined to shed light on the story of Bima's quest for divine enlightenment.

Sumarsam is University Professor of Music at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. He directs the *gamelan* program and teaches Indonesian traditional theater and music performance, history, and theory. He is the author of *Gamelan: Cultural Interaction and Musical Development in Central Java* (1995; Indonesian edition, 2003). His most recent book is *Javanese Gamelan and the West* (2016). His current research focuses on intersections between religion and performing arts, and he is carrying out field and archival research in Indonesia under the auspices of NEH and ACLS fellowship grants (2016–17).

Performing Religion across the Indian Ocean: Commemorating the Family of the Prophet Muhammad in Indonesia

Chiara Formichi

Cornell University

The nexus between local forms of devotion and claims to authenticity can be investigated through four examples of devotion to the “people of the house” of the Prophet Muhammad (*ahl al-bayt*) as manifested in Java and Sumatra (Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, and Bengkulu). Through collections of oral accounts of reconstructed histories, self-narratives, and genealogical rediscoveries, the link between ritual practices and moral geographies unfolds to show how, amid a recent convergence toward an orthopraxy promoted by the Islamic Republic of Iran, the quest for authenticity remains multi-sited.

Chiara Formichi is Assistant Professor in Southeast Asian humanities (Islam) at Cornell University in New York. Her research focuses on the relationship between Islam and the state and how this relationship affects Asia's diverse societies. Her publications have approached

the theme from three border-crossing perspectives: political Islam and nationalist ideologies; secularism/Islamism and sociopolitical modernity; and issues of sectarianism, orthodoxy, and religious pluralism. Her publications include the monograph “Islam and the Making of the Nation: Kartosuwiryo and Political Islam in Twentieth-century Indonesia” (2012) and the edited volumes *Shi’ism in Southeast Asia* (2015) and *Religious Pluralism: State and Society in Asia* (2013).

Past and Present in the Performing Arts of Muslim *Kampung* in East Bali

Ako Mashino
Tokyo University of Arts

In Bali, an island famous for its rich cultural and religious expressions of Hinduism, there also exist several Muslim communities, or *kampung*, with histories of peaceful coexistence with the Hindu majority over hundreds of years. Although Islam dominates Indonesia generally, Muslims are one of the religious minorities on the island, and their culture and tradition have often been marginalized in Balinese society at large. Nevertheless, they have also established and maintained a unique culture and their own performing arts, cultivated through interaction and exchange with both Balinese Hindus and the Muslim cultural networks that extend beyond Bali. The people of these long-standing Muslim *kampung* recognize that they are *dari* Bali (from Bali), born and raised in Bali, that their communities are deeply embedded in Balinese culture and society, and that their difference from the majority is only in their faith.

Muslim Balinese performing arts are generally community-based (performed by and for the *kampung*) and reflect a particular cultural identity. Each *kampung* has its own art forms, with its unique ancestral roots, historical background, and social relationship with neighboring communities, as well as incorporating shared elements, such as material culture, musical forms, performance practices, and aesthetics. For example, the musical instrument most commonly used among the Muslim Balinese, generally known as the *rebana* (frame drum), exhibits a wide variety in size, structure, and musical forms from one *kampung* to another. Different types of performing arts—*rebana* ensemble, *burdah* recitation, and *rudat* (male group dancing)—from three different Muslim *kampung* in the Karangasem District of East Bali are discussed in relation to how the art forms reflect their historical and cultural backgrounds and how they represent their cultural identities in present-day Balinese social circumstances.

Ako Mashino received her BA and MA from Tokyo University of Arts and her doctoral degree from Ochanomizu University (Japan) in 2002. She currently lectures in ethnomusicology at several universities in Tokyo, including Tokyo University of Arts and Kunitachi College of Music. She has written numerous papers and articles on Balinese performing arts. She is now conducting a research project in Muslim Balinese communities.



Muslim frame drum (*rebana*) ensemble in Bali

AKO MASHINO



Javanese shadow-puppets of Bima (right) and the dragon Naga in battle

PERFORMANCE

Javanese Shadow-puppet Play: Bima's Quest for Enlightenment

Thursday, November 10
7:30 pm

Corcoran School of
the Arts and Design,
atrium

Free tickets available at
asia.si.edu/events

Sumarsam, *dhalang* (puppeteer), accompanied by the Javanese Court Gamelan Ensemble of the Embassy of Indonesia, with guest musicians from the Society for Ethnomusicology

Synopsis

A spiritual preceptor named Durna asks his loyal student Bima (the second of the five Pandhawa brothers from the Mahabharata epic) to search for the science of "the Whence and Whither of Being" as a way to achieve divine enlightenment. The fact that Durna resides with the Kurawa (a rival clan and cousins of the Pandhawas) makes Bima's quest a concern for his brothers. Arjuna, another of the Pandhawas, travels to seek advice about his brother's mission. Bima insists, however, that he must obey his teacher in the name of loyalty, sincerity, and strength.

To commence his quest, Bima is required to go to dangerous places. First, he must search for "Tall Tree, Nest of the Wind" on the peak of Mount Candramuka. There, Bima encounters two ferocious ogres that attempt to foil his effort. (The ogres are actually transformed gods testing his will and strength.) Bima repels and kills the giants, but he does not find the tall tree. Disappointed, he returns to Durna empty-handed. Bima's guru then orders him to search for lustrating water in the depths of the ocean. Deep underwater, Bima is attacked by a dragon monster, but he uses his long, sharp nails to kill the beast. Miraculously, the tiny figure of Dewa Ruci appears and teaches Bima the highest mystical insight—the divine enlightenment that includes aspects of Islamic Sufi religiosity.

Overview: Islam within the Central Javanese Shadow-puppet Play (*Wayang*)

Sumarsam

Javanese shadow puppet play (*wayang*) existed long before the Islamization of Java, although its detailed performance practice and the shape of the puppets cannot be known. The majority of *wayang* stories are based on two Hindu epics: Mahabharata and Ramayana. Mahabharata tells a story of a constant conflict among the five Pandhawa brothers and their one hundred cousins, the Kurawas. They are in dispute over land inherited from their ancestors. In Java, stories based on the Mahabharata are far more popular than those from the Ramayana. Perhaps this reflects early Javanese history, when power struggles were constantly in motion among the royal families.

The Islamization of Java has caused aspects of Islamic ideology and religiosity to enter *wayang* stories. Extensive works of Hindu-Javanese and Islamic literature were available to post-Islam court chroniclers, who revised Hindu treatises from a Muslim perspective. The same writers created their own treatises, using Islamic literature as inspiration. This resulted in literary works that have become sources for *dhalang* (puppeteers), who thus incorporated aspects of Islam into *wayang* stories. Javanese believe, for example, that the elder Pandhawa brother (a king) possesses a powerful amulet. The name of this amulet, *kalimasada*, derives from *kalimah sahadat*, the Islamic profession of faith. According to legend, the king delivers the *kalimasada* to one of the *wali* (Islamic saints) who is believed to have used *gamelan* and *wayang* to spread Islam. In addition, some gods in *wayang* wear Persian-style turbans and shoes. The concept of *wahyu*, originally from the Arabic *wahy* (a sign of spiritual and religious merit), became an important theme of many *wayang* stories.

The story of Bima's quest for divine enlightenment is one of the best examples of *wayang* stories that incorporate Sufism. The story emphasizes the reality of the heart as the very center of our being. It also stresses the four colors, which in Javanese mysticism symbolize *nepsu* (passions), related to the *nafs* (lower soul) in the Qur'an: *lawwamah* (self-accusing), *ammarah* (evil), *mutmainnah* (peaceful), and *malhammah* (morally ambiguous).

From the early Islamization of Java, a conflict has occurred between a legalistic form of Javanese Islam and syncretic, Sufi mystical Javanese Islam. While the latter takes a positive stand toward Islamic and Javanese performing arts, the former opposes them. This conflict continued into the twentieth century. It manifested in the ideological differences of the *kaum muda* (young faction), representing the modern/reform perspective, and *kaum tua* (old faction), embracing a long tradition of syncretistic Java-Islam practices. Several Islamic organizations representing the two perspectives emerged in the twentieth century. The most prominent and largest organization of the younger faction is Muhammadiyah; that of the old faction is Nahdatul Ulama (NU). Although these two organizations are ideologically opposed, each has its own dynamic and conflicting views toward *gamelan* and *wayang*.

Founded in 1912, Muhammadiyah sought to purify Islam and return to the fundamental truths of the Qur'an and Hadith. They rejected other Muslim teachers and scholars who taught the syncretic, mystical Islam. They contended that animism, Hinduism, and Sufism must be excised from the life of the true believer. As a motto to promote the reform, the organization used a passage from the Qur'an: *amar ma'ruf-nahi munkar* (a group of people enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong). Among elements considered wrong paths are *takhayul* (imaginings), *bid'ah* (innovations), and *khurafat* (superstitions). Performing arts were to be included among these elements. In the 1990s and 2000s, Muhammadiyah apparently struggled to ignore the prevalence of local arts in the life of Indonesian people. In its national meetings during this period, the organization focused on the relationship between itself and local arts. Although opposition continues, the organization began taking a conciliatory approach toward local arts. The party declared the usefulness of art as a gift from God (*anugerah*) and is allowable (*mubah*), but art should be practiced only if it does not lead people to destruction (*fasad*), danger (*dharar*), evil (*'ishyan*), or away from Allah (*ba'id 'annilah*).



Toy puppets of the *wayang kulit* characters Sinta (left) and Nakula

Groups espousing a liberal Islam concur with Muslim traditionalists in accepting and accommodating preexisting beliefs and customs. This is in parallel with the ideology of Nahdatul Ulama (NU), the rival organization of Muhammadiyah. NU emerged in 1926 from the *pesantren*, Islamic boarding schools whose students are devoted to learning Islamic arts and science. The *pesantren* community has a positive stance toward art. This atmosphere brought about the creation of *selawatan* or *terbangan* (an ensemble mixing Islamic and *gamelan* instruments) and other hybrid cultural expressions. Generally, *pesantren* and NU do not see the tradition of the Javanese, such as *wayang* and *gamelan*, as forbidden.

Essay and synopsis compiled by Sumarsam from his "Past and Present Issues of Islam within the Central Javanese Gamelan and Wayang Kulit," in A. Rasmussen and D. Harnish, eds., *Divine Inspirations: Music and Islam in Indonesia* (2011); material from his recent research; and from Bernard Arps, *Tall Tree, Nest of the Wind: The Javanese Shadow-play Dewa Ruci Performed by Ki Anom Soeroto* (2016).

FAMILY WORKSHOP

Javanese Puppet Painting

Sunday, November 13

11 am–1 pm and 2–4 pm

Arthur M. Sackler Gallery,
ImaginAsia classroom

Free reservations available
at asia.si.edu/events

Explore the islands of Indonesia through theatrical puppetry with Rumah Indonesia. Learn from teaching artists how to decorate your own *wayang* puppet using fabric and paint. This program is designed for children ages 6–12 and adults to enjoy together.

Rumah Indonesia fosters education in Indonesian language, culture, and values for Indonesians living in the diaspora. According to the 2010 census, there are fewer than 100,000 Indonesian Americans, a relatively small number given Indonesia's status as the world's fourth most populous country. Reasons abound why the number of Indonesian immigrants in the United States is so small, from a lack of Indonesian American enclaves (a product perhaps of the more than 350 ethnic groups in Indonesia that do not necessarily form into homogenous communities in the US) to strong customs, beliefs, communities, languages, and a tropical environment that are difficult to transplant to the US. Through classes, workshops, and special events, Rumah Indonesia provides a learning space for community members to retain their emotional and cultural relationships with their native country.



Lightbulb Ensemble

PERFORMANCE

Hamsa: Five Tales

Saturday, November 19
7:30 pm

Corcoran School for
the Arts and Design,
Hammer Auditorium

Tickets available at
asia.si.edu/performance

For Balinese *gamelan*, organ, guitar, video, and narrator
Lightbulb Ensemble and guest artists

Program

Hamsa: Five Tales

Music: Brian Baumbusch (b. 1987)
Text: Paul Baumbusch (b. 1985)

World premiere (2016)

Sapphire
Diamond
Ruby
Emerald
Gold

Lightbulb Ensemble, Balinese *gamelan semar pegulingan*
Christina Stanley, narrator
Brett Carson, organ
Ramon Fermin, guitar

Program Notes

This project started around three years ago, after my family moved back to the United States from living in the Middle East. Over the previous decade I had developed a deep passion and interest in Islamic tilework and geometry, and I visited resplendent mosques and experienced the greatness and beauty of both the culture and religion from the vantage point of a non-Muslim. I started to experiment with musical structures that drew influence from an aesthetic of symmetry, asymmetry, and kaleidoscopic color inspired by these experiences with Islamic art.

Meanwhile, I was composing music for *gamelan* ensembles. I took a trip to Bali to teach one of my compositions to a *gamelan* ensemble near Ubud for a performance at the Bali Arts Festival. The *gamelan* seemed the perfect vessel for realizing these musical symmetries. The musical structure of a *gamelan* is built on interlocking fragments woven together in a tessellation and fractal-like colotomic structures (tuned percussion in layers of graduated density). The project started to take form when I decided to work on a concert-length piece that could follow a narrative based on the Five Pillars of Islam. Each movement would meditate on the moral principle embodied in each pillar. In an exquisite arc, the progression of the pillars seemed to portray:

- the quest of man and artist,
- the admission of faith, giving over to a force greater than oneself,
- humbling oneself before the power and beauty of such a force through prayer,
- carrying this realization into the world and celebrating it through charity,
- denying attachments to worldly pleasures and welcoming solitude and even pain to be closer to this source of greatness through fasting, and
- embarking on the journey toward the unknown, or a return to the known, to the source.

I asked my brother Paul to write five “fables” to be based on each of the pillars. I used these fables as storyboards while I composed the music, drawing inspiration from Balinese *gamelan*, the early minimalism of the 1960s, progressive rock, and other Western art music. The piece became a coloring of this narrative in which I attempted to design musical renditions of tilework tessellations and a shape-shifting kaleidoscope and pair them to the arc of my brother’s stories and themes of the pillars, with musical interludes between each story to reflect their position in the arc.

To keep the auditory and the narrative portions in separate cognitive spaces, the narrator, although present at the front of the stage and expressive in her narration, reads the stories into a filter to render the voice unintelligible. The story texts are simultaneously projected behind her, which requires the listener to read the text in order to follow the stories. This makes the experience of reading the stories an internal one, while the external experience, that of the performers, provides music and nonverbal sound. This project has provided a way for me to bring together disparate experiences—a celebration of the unique time and place we now occupy—and to keep a hold on the joy and inspiration that Islamic art has given me over the years.

—Brian Baumbusch

Characters

Sapphire

A young boy, jealous of his friend’s caged bird, creates his own bird made of patchwork. When he brings it to school and realizes his friend’s lovely, living bird can sing and his patchwork bird cannot, he retreats to the river. A turtle approaches him and says his bird will sing if it is free to do so.

Diamond

An old servant in the house of her master wonders what is behind his bedroom door. A strange light emerges through the cracks. Learning that she cannot enter the room without putting herself in danger, she ventures outside. The new moon tells her, You can enter the splendid room only if you carry nothingness with you.

Ruby

A father orders his son to kill one of the family’s young lambs and serve it during a celebratory feast that night. Attempting to impress a young lady who will attend the celebration, and goaded by a monkey, the boy kills the lamb and offers it to her at the feast.

Emerald

A beggar relentlessly sings his own made-up song during the time of fasting. A young woman offers to bring the beggar to her house, where her eleven sisters live, and to pay him to write more songs for them. Once in the house, he enters the room of each sister and writes her a song. He meets with great temptation in each room.

Gold

A newlywed couple intends to make a pilgrimage, but the young wife falls ill. She remains at home alone while her husband begins the journey with the rest of his troupe. The wife is in agony with sickness. A cloud shaped like a bear tells her to “weave a shawl, but complicate the path.” As she weaves, her husband and the band of travelers appear as if they are tiny ants on the threads of the shawl. She watches them as they encounter perils on their journey.

Artists

Lightbulb Ensemble

As a new-music percussion ensemble, Lightbulb champions experimental composition, instrument building, and contemporary *gamelan*. The San Francisco *Classical Voice* writes that their “refreshingly innovative performances challenge conventional notions of how gamelan music should sound.” The ensemble emerged from the culture of new music in San Francisco centered at Mills College as well as from the long-standing artistic exchange between Bali and the United States fostered by the Bay Area ensemble Gamelan Sekar Jaya. Lightbulb performs on steel metallophones, wooden marimbas, and other instruments designed, tuned, and built by Brian Baumbusch, the ensemble’s founding director. Performing only new repertoire, the group presents in-house compositions and collaborates with other artists of the new-music community, including the Paul Drescher Ensemble, the Center for Contemporary Music, and the duo of Jessika Kenney and Eyvind Kang, among others. They appeared at the Freer|Sackler during the first Performing Indonesia festival in 2013 and returned in 2015 for a concert-length performance that the *Washington Post* called “as cutting edge as cutting edge gets ... ritualistic and almost incantatory, a vast, shape-shifting universe of rhythmic patterns and pungent intonations.”

Brian Baumbusch

Composer and instrumentalist Brian Baumbusch pushes the boundaries of new music with compositions that are “harmonically vivid ... intense ... simmering” (*New York Times*). He has headlined performances at the Bali Arts Festival in Denpasar, the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland in College Park, Kresge Hall at MIT, and other leading venues. Baumbusch has worked extensively with the JACK Quartet, Pauline Oliveros, Larry Polansky, I Made Bandem, Evan Ziporyn, and Paul Drescher.

In 2013 Baumbusch founded the Lightbulb Ensemble, a new-music *gamelan* ensemble performing on percussion instruments that he designed and built. Following its performance at the Freer Gallery in 2015, the *Washington Post* called his piece Hydrogen(2)Oxygen, for American *gamelan* and the JACK Quartet, “exuberantly complex ... built from an ethereal opening into a raging torrent of asymmetrical rhythms, phase-shifting patterns and beautifully strange harmonies ... maddeningly beautiful and ... magnificent, and as intoxicating as a drug.” Baumbusch continues to be an influential force in the California *gamelan* community, both as director of the Lightbulb Ensemble and as director of the UC Santa Cruz Balinese *gamelan* ensemble.

Islam and the Performing Arts in Indonesia

David Harnish and Anne Rasmussen

Indonesia is home to more Muslims than any other country. Indonesians make up about 13 percent of the entire world's Muslim population, and they dominate the Islamic population of Southeast Asia, accounting for over 88 percent of Muslims in the region. Famous for its courtly arts traditions from Hindu and Buddhist cultural periods, Indonesia also features numerous music forms that are either Islamic in nature, Islam-inspired, or pan-Islamic, that is, shared with other Muslim communities in Southeast Asia, South Asia, and West Asia. As a set of cultural practices, Islam has been a source of both inspiration and limitation for the performing arts and expressive culture throughout the history and geography of the country.

Historically, Muslim traders began traveling to and settling in Indonesia's archipelago in significant numbers from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The region had already developed rich and diverse folk and court traditions, the latter inspired by Indic influence. While folk arts were performed as part of indigenous rites connected to divine ancestors, agricultural fertility, and the land, the courtly arts reflected and promoted the earlier Hindu and Buddhist cultural strata. Courtly arts were used to popularize and teach the Buddhist and Hindu religions, to empower the courts and nobles, and to reify the constructs of rulership. Once Islam was embraced by rulers, many of whom converted their titles from Indic "Raja" to Islamic "Sultan," some of these arts were modified to reflect and communicate new symbols and values that reinforced the power and status of the ruling elite. Thus, Islamic influences came to be seen and heard in many of the arts, including gamelan traditions, sung poetry, and theater. Quite apart from influencing extant arts, new music and dance forms considered specifically Islamic (for example, collective singing in Arabic accompanied by *rebana* frame drums) were introduced from abroad or by returning pilgrims and were adopted over time. Thus the influence of Islam on extant arts and the introduction of new Islamic ideas and practices led to the hybridity that characterized the period of early contact and is still ongoing today.

The tradition of skepticism, caution, or disapproval of music in Islamic communities is well known in Middle Eastern and Arab contexts. The extent to which such discussions concerning the "permissibility of music" are applicable to twenty-first-century Indonesia is debatable. Conversations on the effects of music, dance, and theatric performance have been adopted, adapted, and debated in the same ways that other ideological frameworks originating in an Arab context are imported and assimilated into the fabric of local culture. Suffice it to say that Indonesia, while adopting and adapting liberally from the Muslim menu, seems to have largely avoided the problematized position of music and instead has preserved local attitudes on the role of the arts or has blended the larger Islamic world perspective with the local worldview.

In addition to the waxing and waning of opinions about music, Indonesia inherited a number of instrument-types from the Muslim world that migrated to the archipelago. Many Indonesian musical instruments have relatives in what used to be called Mesopotamia or elsewhere in the Muslim world. Wooden double-reed aerophones, frame drums, the *rebab* (fiddle), the *bedhug* (barrel drum), and the *gambus* (lute) are some examples of instruments that have cousins in the Muslim world outside of Indonesia. Several of these, such as the *gambus*, came with the Yemini Hadramautis as they settled in Indonesia. Instruments that originate from Islamic areas rimming the Indian Ocean (frame drums, double-reed aerophones, *gambus*, and *rebab*) confirm Indonesia's place in music of the Muslim world. Beyond material construction, instrumental and vocal styles can index an Islamic spirit in any music, from the singing of *sholawat* (songs in praise of the Prophet Muhammad) to the latest pop hit in the *dangdut* style.

Since Indonesian independence from the Dutch following World War II, and particularly over recent decades, Islam has become a political, social, and martial force within Indonesia that has become increasingly visible and impossible to ignore. While Islamic leaders have occasionally prohibited a given music or dance form in their areas of influence (for instance, *jaipongan* and *dangdut* for female dancers, and the occasional gamelan style or shadow-puppet theater associated with a Hindu or pre-orthodox period), discussions on Indonesian music must include Islam as both an indigenous cultural power and a source for artistic inspiration.

The relative acceptability of artistic expression in connection to Islam can be found in the terms *seni Islam* and *musik Islam* or *seni musik Islam* (Islamic art and Islamic music), which are coined in many areas to identify acknowledged and approved works, forms, genres, and artists. Some artists and government offices further distinguish *musik Islam* (forms originally from the Middle East or Islamic South Asia) from *musik islami* (Indonesian music with Islamic characteristics). These kinds of categorizations reveal (1) an impulse by officials and leaders to conceptualize values, histories, symbolism, and musical forms; (2) a tendency to thus subject all expressive forms to scrutiny to determine acceptability; (3) a cognitive distinction between imported and local Islamic arts; and, most importantly, (4) music is not banned out of hand and in fact has an acknowledged place in Indonesian Islam. Local artistic expressions of Islam have frequently been approved historically and may be increasingly acceptable as long as there are apparent Islamic themes, the music and dance enhance sobriety and morality (or at least do not promote immorality), and the whole performance medium (message, behavior, venue, and context) does not conflict with or distract from basic Islamic duties and practice. Many Indonesians believe that a development of Islamic arts is necessary for the future of Islamic civilization.

Prior to the coming of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, the religious beliefs of the hundreds of ethnic groups that occupied the Indonesian archipelago were encompassed into what was to be called *adat*, an Arabic loan word referring to cultural customs, traditions, and spiritual systems (nature and ancestor worship) that necessitate performing arts as part of ritual practice. The practice of *adat* helped acculturate Hinduism and Buddhism (and later Islam) into divergent syntheses across the archipelago. *Adat* persists in most areas of Indonesia, although traditional beliefs associated with *adat* have been diluted or transformed in response to the dominance of world religions (particularly Islam) over recent centuries. *Adat* is often incorporated into Islam or vice versa, but since many modernists judge or legislate religious practice, leaders may label *adat* as “non-Muslim” and as a reflection of the impurities in Indonesian Islam. Their goal is to denounce the monism of pre-Islamic thought, where the divine is one and unified both here and everywhere with the physical world, in favor of the dualism of Islamic worldview, which bifurcates the universe and world into opposing parts, such as good and evil or heaven and earth. Such declarations have impacted “traditional” music and its contexts, particularly if a performance is part of a ceremony that is associated with *adat*, syncretism, or heterodoxy.

While areas of Sumatra facing the Indian Ocean adapted to Islam at an earlier period, the history of music and Islam in the influential Javanese courts lies near the border of myth and fact from the early Islamic period through the nineteenth century. The first Islamic Sultanates were essentially still Hindu in practice and relied on Hindu constructs of divine rulership, semi-divine and charismatic kings, and attention to ritual—including music, dance, and theater—to maintain and legitimize authority. As Islamic ideology and practice were institutionalized, the arts became tools for popularizing the religion and the conversion process among commoners and courtiers alike. Sufi mysticism replaced or merged with Hindu-Buddhist Tantric mysticism, and practitioners adopted similar aesthetic ideals and communal practices, such as chanting, singing, movement, prayer, ritual, and so forth. Thus, although early manifestations of Islam were those of elite spiritual practice, commoners soon began to embrace and identify with the new religion.

Due to the ongoing process of localizing Sufic/Islamic ideology and the synthesis with Hindu-Buddhism, the adoption of Islam did not radically alter musical practices in Java; rather it made them deeper and more complex. The rendering of poetry in song (*tembang*) and the playing of ensembles on mostly percussion instruments have been practiced in courts and hamlets for many centuries. Texts and creation myths expressed in *wayang kulit* (shadow-puppet theater) ran parallel to the narratives of Islam and have continued unabated. Islamic elements were woven into extant Hindu-derived *wayang* tales and new narratives; for example, the Serat Menak stories featuring Amir Hamza, an Arab protagonist and uncle of the Prophet, maintained the same narrative structure (and notions of morality and personal power) and easily complemented the Hindu tales.

Three basic processes thus outline the substance of music and Islam in Indonesia: (1) the adoption or adaptation of “music” forms introduced by visiting or settling populations (including evangelists) or returning Hajjis; (2) modifying and/or reinterpreting existing forms as “Islamic” or “Islam-inspired”; and (3) Islam as a source of inspiration for new forms. For the former, expressive and Islamic ideologies seem to have come from such places as Gujarat (India) and Hadramaut (Yemen) (among many others) but also from Indian Ocean trade routes coming into such places



The *qasida rabana* group Ash-Sam-Pul, winner of the Sulawesi Islamic song contest in 2003

as North and West Sumatra. Sufi orders (*tarekat*, introducing such forms in Arabic as *hadrah* and *dhikr*), martial arts (*pencak silat*), and Malay forms (*hikayat*, *zapin*, forms deriving from the Barzanji text) inspired performance to internalize the teachings of the Qur'an and bring one closer to Allah. It is crucial to note that the vocal renditions of Qur'anic recitation and the Call to Prayer (and sometimes Arab *maqamat*, or melodic mode, modulations) underlay much of these *seni Islam* forms, which are overwhelmingly vocal and in Arabic; festivalization has helped stimulate, standardize, and increase the virtuosic quality of some of these forms. Of course, more secular forms were also introduced, such as the "Turkish" and Malay theater (*stamboel*) that were both entertaining and instructional. The latter category includes reinterpretations or modifications of existing forms—in some cases, gamelan, *wayang kulit*, social or royal dance forms (such as the women-led, Acehnese *rateb meuseukat*), and even trance dancing (such as *kuda kepang*). This process is still ongoing.

Islam as a source of inspiration in new forms and creativity is found virtually everywhere (excepting such places as Hindu Bali and Catholic Flores) in Indonesia. *Dangdut*, for instance, as promulgated by the pioneering Rhoma Irama, brought *dakwah* (proselytizing for Islam) into popular culture, while composers and choreographers find motivation within Islam and craft works reflecting personal religious experiences. Artists are using the *gambus* lute (its very sound conveying Islam value in Indonesia) in a variety of new and sometimes popular forms. New expressions are often assisted by the mediascape, which Indonesians have embraced throughout the country: for instance, boy bands and pious girls sing about morality, ring tones remind one to pray, popular bands praise the Prophet (including rock bands that might use an occasional *gambus* or frame drum, or sing a chorus in Arabic), and online communities discuss religion and love.

Unique and progressive approaches to religious and arts practices in Indonesia are increasingly visible among students and professors of Islamic studies around the world. "Islams" and "musics," however, are not entities that exist in a vacuum; they must be set in operation, practiced, (re) interpreted, and lived. Human agency—decisions made by Indonesians to specific Indonesian challenges—is key to seeing how these phenomena have developed in particular regions at particular times in particular ways. The processes of Islam in Indonesian music are still ongoing and will always be so, and these processes cannot be easily reduced and must be positioned in multiple-mirrored ways.

—Adapted from David Harnish and Anne Rasmussen, eds., "Introduction," *Divine Inspirations: Music and Islam in Indonesia* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

David Harnish is professor and chair of the Department of Music at the University of San Diego. Anne Rasmussen is a professor in the Department of Music at the College of William and Mary.



Indonesia in Brief

The Republic of Indonesia is a Southeast Asian country located on the equator between Australia and the mainland of Asia and between the Pacific and Indian Oceans. As it lies between two continents and two oceans, Indonesia is also called Nusantara (archipelago in between). Consisting of 17,508 islands, Indonesia is the largest island country in the world.

With a population of 250 million people in 2013, Indonesia is the world's fourth most populous country and is home to the largest Muslim population in the world. The Indonesian House of Representatives and the president are directly elected. The capital city is Jakarta on the island of Java. Indonesia shares borders with Malaysia on Borneo Island, with Papua New Guinea on Papua Island, and with East Timor on Timor Island. Other neighboring countries include Singapore, the Philippines, Australia, and the union territory of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in India. Stretching from Sabang to Merauke, Indonesia boasts a tremendous variety of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, with the Javanese being the largest ethnic group. Indonesia's national motto is "Bhineka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity). Besides having a large population and densely populated regions, Indonesia possesses natural areas that support the second highest level of biodiversity in the world.

The islands became an important trading area when the Kingdom of Sriwijaya established religious and trade relations with China and India. Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms developed in the early centuries of the first millennium, followed by the traders who brought Islam. Later came a variety of European countries who battled for control of the lucrative spice trade in the Moluccas. After more than three centuries of Dutch rule, Indonesia declared its independence at the end of World War II. Subsequently, Indonesia faced challenges from natural disasters, corruption, separatism, the process of democratization, and a period of rapid economic change.



Performing Indonesia: Music, Dance, and Theater

Visit our new online publication at asia.si.edu/research

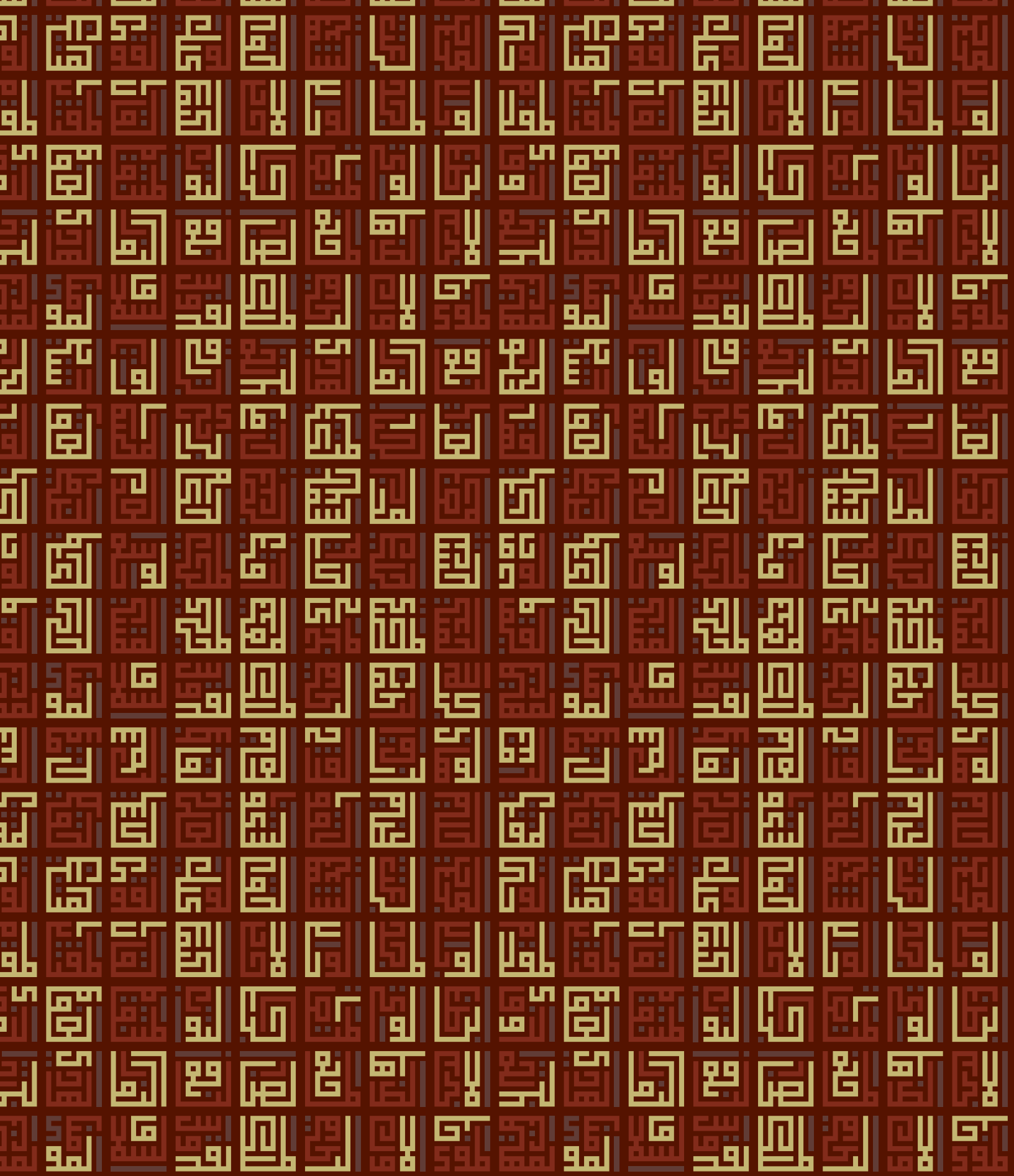
Learn about traditional Indonesian performing arts, their impact around the world, and current trends in passing them to new generations.

The site features interactive articles by 16 leading specialists on Indonesian performing arts in Java, Bali, Roti, Sumatra, Borneo, Lombok, and the United States, plus

- 25 original videos
- 13 audio recordings
- more than 100 photographs

Scholarly essays are based on expanded versions of talks given at Performing Indonesia: A Conference and Festival of Music, Dance, and Drama, held at the Smithsonian Institution in 2013 as a joint presentation of the Freer and Sackler Galleries and the Embassy of Indonesia.





FREER | SACKLER
THE SMITHSONIAN'S MUSEUMS OF ASIAN ART



The Embassy of the
Republic of Indonesia,
Washington, D.C.



THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC