

## Essay for the *Legong: Dance of the Virgins* DVD

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This recording is the result of a fruitful collaboration between Richard Marriott of Clubfoot Orchestra and I Made Subandi, guest musical director of Gamelan Sekar Jaya, during 1998-1999. *Legong: Dance of the Virgins: A Story of the South Seas* was released by Paramount Pictures in 1935 without recorded dialogue, but it did have a musical score. Although the original score included a brief field recording of the Barong dance, it was otherwise scored exclusively for symphony orchestra in a style consistent with American interwar travelogue films. Thus, the many scenes of the film that featured Balinese musical ensembles were represented by the flutes, cymbals, and drums of the symphony orchestra. These sounds, though pleasing, could in no way approximate the shimmering tonal qualities of a Balinese *gamelan gong kebyar* or the haunting resonances of an *angklung* ensemble.

The composers, together with the members of Gamelan Sekar Jaya, saw the opportunity to create a new score for the film which thoroughly integrated the instruments of Bali with the Western instrumentation. In this way, they could respond not only to its drama, but to the brilliant music and dance scenes that punctuate each important moment in the story. After viewing a rare copy of the film (painstakingly restored by the UCLA Film and Television Archive a few years earlier), Marriott and Subandi were commissioned by Gamelan Sekar Jaya to collaborate on a new score for the film. The composers quickly decided that traditional Balinese music would be used for the scenes that featured dance ceremonies, cremations, and other rituals, and Western instruments for the scenes that focused on Western-style plot development. After several months of intensive rehearsal, *Legong: Dance of the Virgins* premiered at the Castro Theatre in San Francisco in May 1999, featuring Subandi and Marriott's new score, performed by Gamelan Sekar Jaya and members of the Clubfoot Orchestra. A few years later, this recording of the score was made to document this extraordinary collaboration.

### *The film*

“Out in the Dutch East Indies, just south of the equator, lies Bali – isle of perpetual summer. In this peopled paradise, untouched by civilization, lives a contented race who joyously worship their gods – to them life is a continuous feast – to them death holds no fear. Here we relate a romance of Balinese life, based on facts and authentic customs – enacted with an all-native cast, and produced in its entirety upon the Isle of Bali.” With this exotic invocation opens the film *Legong: Dance of the Virgins: A Story of the South Seas*.

*Legong: Dance of the Virgins* (Bennett Pictures Corporation, 1935) was shot on location in Bali, Indonesia, between May and August 1933. Directed by Henry de la Falaise, known as Marquis Le Bailly de la Falaise de la Coudraye (1898-1972), with Gaston Glass (1898-1965), *Legong* featured an all-Balinese cast. *Legong* was one of two films produced by Bennett Pictures, for which La Falaise – previously Gloria Swanson's third husband – served as the principal along with his better-known screen actress wife, Constance Bennett (1904-1965), founder of Bennett Pictures Corporation. La Falaise and Glass traveled to Bali with their cameraman, William Howard (Duke) Greene, the highly regarded Technicolor specialist who went on to win an Academy award for his work on *Phantom of the Opera* (1943). This film, along with *Kliou: The Killer* (1936; also directed by La Falaise and produced by Bennett Pictures), a jungle story about a deadly tiger, were among the last of the two-color Technicolor films produced in Hollywood. The “exotic” Balinese mise-en-scene contributed to the success of *Legong* at the box office; the film played for an exceptionally long 10-week run at the New York World Theater in 1935.

*Legong: Dance of the Virgins* was reconstructed in 1992 by the UCLA Film and Television Archives using censored prints from the United States, Britain, and Canada. At the time of the film's distribution by Paramount Pictures Corporation, scenes of nudity were trimmed for domestic release in the United States, and shots of cockfights were excised from the British prints. By duplicating and splicing the remaining negatives of prints from Canada, England, and the United States, the film was restored to its complete length. The original, restored print was first shown at the 5<sup>th</sup> Festival of Preservation, on April 25, 1993, almost sixty years after La Falaise began shooting the film.

### *Plot summary*

According to a 1935 review in *Variety*, the story of *Legong: Dance of the Virgins* could be summarized in the following sentence: "Native beauty kills herself by plunging off a high bridge when she finds her lover has tossed her overboard for her sister." Succinct though such a summary may be, there is more to *Legong: Dance of the Virgins* than a sentimental love story. It belongs to a genre of interwar narrative films, shot in an exotic locale, which adapted indigenous folklore to American and European tastes. This was an auspicious genre of documentary filmmaking because it supported the fantasy and mythology that accompanied the first wave of the far-flung mass international tourist trade. *Legong* is also an exceptional example of the successful interplay between exotic spectacle, ethnographic detail, and a compelling story.

In the film, a young girl, Poutou, has been selected as one of her village's Legong dancers. She is to remain "the chaste maiden and sacred dancer of the Temple" until she falls in love, after which she will dance for the final time in celebration of her impending marriage. Poutou is attracted to the young musician Nyong, a talented newcomer in the local gamelan orchestra. Poutou's father is delighted with her choice, and Poutou spends much time preparing food for Nyong's visit to their house, officially marking their engagement. But Nyong's interest is soon diverted to young Saplak, who is Poutou's half-sister. The two meet each other clandestinely, in groves and on bridges, but several villagers see them together and disclose their secret. When Poutou discovers that Nyong and Saplak are eloping to be married, she is so distraught that she chooses suicide as the only way to maintain her honor. The love story is linked to the various rituals portrayed in the film, ending with a dramatic parade of funeral pyres to the cremation grounds.

### *Historical Context*

In the 1920s and 1930s, Bali was becoming a popular destination for Western artists and intellectuals, who believed that they had found an enchanted land, full of beauty and resonance, far away from the military fantasies of Western Europe. By the mid-1930s, Bali, a Hindu jewel in the Muslim crown of the Indonesian archipelago, was well established as a resort for the jet-set, and about 30,000 tourists visited the island each year. As Tessel Pollmann, a revisionist historian of Balinese history, explains, Bali had well-paved roads, rolling rice fields, and was virtually unspoiled by the ravages of colonial agriculture (1990). The allure of beautiful young girls and willing boys was an added attraction, making Bali the "Eastern Paradise" of the 1930s.

*Legong: Dance of the Virgins* bears the stamp of the resident European-American intellectual/artist community in Bali during this period. The centerpiece of this vision of Bali was the artist colony in Ubud, whose most famous member, Walter Spies, served as the

unofficial guide to the best-known visiting European and American artists, musicians, filmmakers, and anthropologists during the late 1920s and 1930s. Spies was a Moscow-born German expatriate artist who served as the indispensable cultural broker of interwar Bali, facilitating long-term visits by anthropologists Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson, composer Colin McPhee and his anthropologist wife Jane Belo, and the dance ethnographer Beryl de Zoete, among others. Spies was perhaps best known for his unique style of painting, which combined “surrealist” techniques with Balinese scenes and myths. Initially influenced by the work of Otto Dix and Oskar Kokoschka, in a 1919 letter to his father Spies wrote that he wished to “free himself of the indoctrination and prejudices about taste and beauty” in order to find his own style. Spies settled in Bali in 1927, where he lived and painted until his untimely death in 1942. Although no records have been found indicating whether Spies facilitated the making of *Legong*, it is very likely that La Falaise and his crew were indebted to Spies and other Western expatriates for access to Ubud villages and their ceremonies.

McPhee and Spies were both active in documenting and preserving Balinese performance traditions. McPhee was a well-known Canadian composer and musician whose deep interest in Balinese music inspired him to exhaustively document a wide variety of *gamelan* genres. Much of this documentation became the subject of his detailed and comprehensive treatise, *Music in Bali* (1956), a text which remains invaluable to composers and scholars of Balinese music today. McPhee was particularly interested in transcribing *gender wayang*, the music produced by pairs of bronze metallophones with bamboo resonators to accompany *wayang kulit*, the shadow puppet plays depicting stories from the sacred texts of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. His main informant was the famous Balinese composer I Wayan Lotring, with whom he helped revive old *gender wayang* traditions by establishing and supporting functioning ensembles to perform that repertoire. Spies – artist, impresario, and musician – was instrumental in reviving *kecak*, the vocalized “monkey trance dance” performed by groups of eighty men in concentric circles representing the monkey army sent by Prince Rama to rescue his wife Sita. Spies organized and then choreographed the *kecak* performance that appeared in Victor Baron von Plessen’s 1931 film entitled *Insel der Dämonen (Island of Demons)*.

In the context of interwar Bali, the performing arts were rhapsodized by European and American visitors as a “natural” way of being in a “timeless” pre-industrial age. According to Pollmann (1990), the performing arts were part of a “Balinization” policy, which, in the words of Balinese history professor Dr. Ide Gde Ng. Bagus, meant that “the Dutch wanted us to be a living museum” (1990: 15). Balinization served the interests of the tourist economy, and has remained an important focus of the political and economic development of the island to this day. But while Western tourists and artists flocked to Bali during the 1920s and 1930s to enjoy “the good life,” the Balinese peasantry on the island lived in near abject poverty, largely due to the virtual collapse of the export economy, and the exploitative Landrent taxation system, established by the colonial Dutch administration.

American travelogue films about Bali from the 1930s implied the fantasy of female promiscuity, untainted by disease and urban squalor, complemented by a rich cultural performance tradition in an abundant landscape. The disrobed native woman was most often noted in trade reviews of the film travelogues, such as *Isle of Paradise* (directed and filmed by Charles Trego, 1932) and *Goona-Goona [Love Powder]* (produced by André Roosevelt and Armand Denis, 1932), both of which were precursors to *Legong: Dance of the Virgins*. In fact, another version of the detailed cremation ceremony tacked on the end of *Goona-Goona* was more successfully integrated into the closing segment of *Legong: Dance of the Virgins*, memorializing Poutou’s suicide.

In each of these films, Bali was presented as a site of timeless beauty and romance. A documentary film that Robert Flaherty had planned to make with F. W. Murnau in Bali during the late 1920s—*Bali: The Ultima Thule of Our Desires*—was abandoned in favor of *Tabu: A Story of the South Seas* (dir. Flaherty and Murnau, 1929) (Barnouw 1972). The Latin expression *ultima thule* refers to the highest degree attainable, and best describes American and European perceptions of Bali as paradise.

### *A close reading of the film*

The title of the film refers to the *Legong* dance, one of the most celebrated of all Balinese dances. It dates back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, and its choreography combines elements borrowed from the *Sanghyang Dedari* tradition, a dance of exorcism performed by two teenage girls in a trance state, and the *Gambuh*, the prototype of the court theater genre (Picard 1990: 50). According to popular legend, Prince Karna (a Balinese prince who ruled during the nineteenth century), dreamed that he saw young nymphs in heaven performing a refined and graceful dance. When the prince awoke, he fulfilled his vision by teaching the dance and the music of his meditative dream to his village.

During the early 1920s, the *Legong* dance became associated with *kebyar*, a “democratic” and virtuosic performance style linked to the emergence of village gamelans, which separated dance from its dramatic and ritual context. *Kebyar* transformed the *Legong* dance into a form of entertainment, just as Western tourists began visiting Bali. As Colin McPhee has explained, *kebyar* was initially a musical piece played on a *gamelan gong gede*, which demonstrated the virtuosity of musicians (1966: 328). By the late 1920s, villages were melting down their *gamelan semar pegulingan* ensembles, typically associated with the Balinese royal courts, to make *gamelan gong kebyar* ensembles. This newer ensemble, featured in the film, was created especially to play the faster, rhythmically explosive genre of music characterized by *kebyar*. The *gamelan gong kebyar*, with its quick interlocking patterns and sudden changes in tempo, also influenced the rhythm and style of traditional dances, such as *Legong*. The interplay between sacred and profane performance is part of the dynamic repertoire of Balinese performance culture, which, from the early 1920s until the present, has evolved in relation to the international tourist economy.

The film is consistently punctuated by scenes of everyday Balinese life such as the marketplace, a cockfight, and extended sequences devoted to the *Djanger* and *Legong* dances. Cockfighting is the favorite sport of Poutou’s father Bagus, and the short sequence depicting his fascination with the sport emphasizes the role of the wager and chance in the film. Perhaps the most impressive of the traditional performances in the film is the *Barong* temple dance, described as a myth about a prince who is turned into a lion by a the evil witch, Rangda. The emotional intensity of this ritualized dance reaches its pinnacle when *Barong*, a mythical beast who protects the community, performed by two dancers, confronts and tries to kill Rangda, the personification of death and destruction, performed by a man wearing a frightening mask and a costume with pendulous breasts. During the mock battle, the followers of the *Barong* receive protective powers from him as they attack Rangda. They demonstrate how strong these powers are when, in trance, they turn their ritual swords upon themselves without injury. The film’s intertitles make exaggerated claims here about “sham suicides,” asserting that, “Through courage born of madness—they set out to slay Rangda, the witch. But in accord with the grotesque legend they must fail. And having failed, must sham suicide.” The *Barong/Rangda* ritual, a centuries-old tradition that serves to reenact the balancing forces of nature, is considered a stabilizing event by Balinese rather than an uncontrolled display of primitive passions.

After the *Barong* dance, Bagus congratulates Nyong for his excellent performance in the *gamelan* orchestra, and invites him to visit his house. The invitation, which is set for the following day, presents an opportunity for Nyong to begin courting Poutou. The next day, on his way to Bagus's house, Nyong encounters Saplak for the first time. Unlike the more equivalent initial exchange of glances between Nyong and Poutou, Nyong's first encounter with Saplak begins with him watching her, unaware, as she fetches water at the spring, disrobes, and bathes herself. Saplak, as the object of Nyong's desire, is depicted in a manner similar to the way in which non-Western "native" women were represented in the semi-pornographic picture postcards of the interwar period, the best known being the French picture postcards of nude Algerian women – what Pollmann refers to as "the colonial tradition of the pornographic cabinet-photo" (1990: 10).

The opposition between Poutou's choice of Nyong as her future husband and Nyong's desire for Saplak serves as a centerpiece of the film and is clearly depicted in a parallel editing sequence. Nyong's flirtation with Saplak is juxtaposed with shots of Poutou meticulously preparing for Nyong's visit. Poutou prepares rice cakes and sweets, and even goes to the market to purchase palm wine for her future husband. Immediately afterward, the camera shows us Nyong declaring his love for Saplak: "You're the most beautiful maid in all Bali—May I talk with you a while?" Only at this point do we learn that Saplak is Poutou's younger half-sister. In addition, we learn that Nyong's interest in Saplak is not a secret, but has been witnessed by two market women who function as a Greek Chorus, remarking, "Only yesterday, his glances were for Poutou."

Poutou, still unaware of Nyong's change of heart, is preparing for her last temple dance, anticipating that Nyong will ask her father's permission to marry her. Instead, when Nyong and Bagus sit down for their long-awaited conversation, it is Saplak whom Nyong asks to marry. Bagus is shocked, and replies, "Impossible! Poutou has chosen. Disgrace would follow! — Never will I consent." At this point, Nyong and Saplak decide to elope. Using a leaf, Nyong sends Saplak a note, "Beloved Saplak, meet me after the Temple dance and we will go away forever. Nyong." During the course of the *Djanger* dance, a prelude to the *Legong* dance, while Poutou is dressing backstage, she discovers the leaf note and realizes that Saplak and Nyong are planning to run away together. In tearful dejection, Poutou does not appear at the appointed moment for her last *Legong* dance. She is finally coaxed into appearing by temple caretakers, but she faints at the end of her dance, her "shattered dreams and hope forever gone." In a state of shock, Poutou seeks solitude and retreats. While walking over the bamboo bridge she spots Saplak and Nyong kissing one another on the other side. Poutou removes the flower from her head and hurls herself off the bridge, onto the shallow rocky riverbed below. All that remains is her green headscarf, which floats sadly down the river.

The cremation ceremony and funeral pyre in Poutou's honor is presided over by Bagus and the village priest. "Sadly—Gousti Bagus sent his beloved one on her way through fire—to reincarnation." At this point Bagus lights the funeral pyre, and the priest holds out his arms. Bagus stands beside the pyre and the screen fades to black. As an idyllic image of the shoreline comes into view, boats rock in the gentle current and Bagus watches the sunset: "As the sun flooded the sea with the beauty of its parting glow—the pure soul of a maid set out upon its journey." The conclusion of the film is a return to the opening image of the film, where the tourist description of Bali as "...the Isle of perpetual summer," is finally recontextualized as the site of a community bounded by tradition.

### *The Musical Score: Then and Now*

When *Legong: Dance of the Virgins* was released, it had an original musical score on an accompanying soundtrack. The orchestra was directed by S. K. Wineland, and the music was supervised by Abe Meyer. Although not much is known about S. K. Wineland, Abe Meyer had by 1933 established his reputation as a composer of musical scores for *film noir* and horror films. He had composed scores for *White Zombie* (1932), *A Shriek in the Night* (1933), and *The Sphinx* (1933) by the time *Legong* was in production, and went on to compose for such cult classics as *The Return of Chandu* (1934) and *Revolt of the Zombies* (1936). Meyer's scoring emphasized the melodramatic qualities of the plot and did not attempt to approximate the sounds that would have been produced by the bronze metallophones, bamboo resonators, and drums that characterize most traditional Balinese musical ensembles, such as the *gamelan gong kebyar* and the *gender wayang*.

This new sound recording by Gamelan Sekar Jaya and the Club Foot Orchestra asserts the profound musical intent that underlies the visually compelling *gamelan* and dance sequences in the film, while subtly enhancing the twists and turns of the plot. Creating a new score for a silent film always presents challenges, but these challenges are multiplied when the score must be composed for several distinctly tuned ensembles. The musicians of Gamelan Sekar Jaya performed on three different *gamelan* ensembles for this score, each with its own unique tuning. The *gamelan gong kebyar* is a five-toned *gamelan*, the pitches of which seem to fit most closely into a C-sharp minor scale. The *gamelan angklung* is a four-toned ensemble whose pitches are similar to a B-flat major scale. The *gender wayang* ensemble uses two metallophones whose tuning approximates the Lydian mode beginning on D. The musicians of the Clubfoot Orchestra tuned their Western instruments to approximate *gamelan* tunings whenever possible, creating a lush aural landscape, full of microtonal variations.

The expansive orchestration of this new score recalls some of the impressionistic work of late-nineteenth-century composers such as Claude Debussy (1862-1918) and Edvard Grieg (1843-1907). In fact, the music for Saplak's bathing scene (intertitled as "The Warmth of the Morning Sun," one of several titles borrowed by Marriott and Subandi for their score) begins with a reverse quote of one of the most famous movements from Grieg's *Peer Gynt Suites* (No. 1, Op. 46), composed in 1875-1876, entitled "Morning Mood." This movement of the *Peer Gynt Suites* was often used in cartoons and other televised media of the 1930s to represent the peace and tranquility of the morning, so the quotation is doubly appropriate. The first four phrases of this piece are constructed with dominant seventh chords moving in thirds, with pentatonic scalar themes superimposed on the dominant seventh chords, reminiscent of Debussy's early period, especially *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* (1892-1894). Contemporary dance music also influenced the score. For example, the way that the cello propels the strings in the section "Days Idle By" – associated with the scene where Nyong is walking over to Bagus's house to announce that he wants to marry Saplak – has a funky and confident feel.

The tonality of the score is also affected by the tuning of each *gamelan* ensemble. The Western instruments did not perform with the *gender wayang* instruments because the tunings were too disparate. The Clubfoot Orchestra did play with the *gong kebyar* and the *angklung* ensembles, adjusting their diatonic scales to keep the harmonies pleasing. When performing with the *angklung* ensemble, for example, the strings and winds would play pentatonic scales, or would stay in a chromatic Lydian dominant mode, with a couple of added tones, as in the section "Days Idle By."

Some of the compositional process derived from standard silent-film compositional technique, which involves the mimicking of action with sound. For example, bamboo shakers called *gocok* represented the hustle and bustle of the marketplace, as well as the two market women gossiping. Two kids smoking cigarettes and talking with one another were represented by a clarinet and a trumpet, each of which “duplicated” the motions of one of the kids. The scrolls on which intertitles and plot summaries appeared were reminiscent of the explanatory interludes of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet) performances, so the *gender wayang* ensemble performed during those sections of the film.

### ***The Collaborative Process***

The entire film can be seen as a particular kind of period piece, in which Hollywood artists told a “native story.” With this in mind, Gamelan Sekar Jaya and Richard Marriott decided that a new score could go in the opposite direction, exploding all sorts of myths about how two cultures can intermingle artistically. Combining the musical resources of the two ensembles seemed a logical next step, so in 1998, Gamelan Sekar Jaya and Richard Marriott undertook the ambitious task of creating a new soundtrack for *Legong: Dance of the Virgins*. In conceiving their new score for the film, composers I Made Subandi and Richard Marriott wanted to create music that would match the lushness, beauty, and sensuality of the setting. They also wanted to provide a matching aural subtext for the visual action and plot development by combining Balinese percussion ensembles and Western string quartet and winds in interesting and appropriate ways.

Mapping out the movie is one of the most critical steps, for this is where the composers determine where the music needs to change. When everything works well, the music helps divide the film into coherent sections, making it more intelligible and deepening the emotional, dramatic, and visual impact.

Richard Marriott recalls, “The collaboration with Subandi was incredibly easy because he’s a fantastic person and we had an immediate similar reaction to almost everything. We both decided that the more traditional scenes – dances, cremations, etc. – should have traditional music, and the more Western-driven scenes – such as Saplak’s bathing scene – should have Western-derived music. So Subandi composed the traditional scenes, and I wrote for the more melodramatic. We both decided on the ‘in-between’ scenes immediately – in that first session, we mapped out 70- percent of the film. There are a couple of places where this is really evident: the cockfighting scene close to the beginning, for example, where all these men seem to be talking and shouting. I told Subandi that it would be great to have some vocalizing there. He immediately started doing this gambling chanting that you hear in cockfights, and a couple of minutes later I was clapping out a rhythm for the strings. There was another time when Subandi was singing ‘Semara Dana,’ a vocal piece about karma. That was the vocal piece that ends up being sung over a string drone when Poutou jumps off the bridge. Also, when we watched the scene where Poutou is beating rice with a bamboo tube, we remembered that Gamelan Sekar Jaya had bamboo tubes, so we immediately developed a *kotekan* [interlocking pattern] using bamboo tubes.”

But there are fundamental differences between Balinese and Western music, which made this collaboration especially challenging. The two musical traditions lie in separate sonic universes – as Claude Debussy discovered when he first heard Indonesian *gamelan* at the Paris International Exhibition in 1889. A Balinese *gamelan* (percussion orchestra) uses a vastly different tuning system than does a Western orchestra. Not only do the notes of a *gamelan* fall

outside the Western scale, but the instruments are constructed and tuned in pairs. Each member of the pair is tuned slightly differently from its partner to create a sonorous contrast when the two are sounded together. Because these strictly controlled paired tunings apply to all the instruments of the *gamelan* – from lowest to highest, and from gongs to metallophones to pots – the result is a pulsating sea of overtones. In most Western music, in contrast, the harmonic sequences of the overtone series determine the musical aesthetics of harmony, such that “beats” or pulsations between unisons mean that they are out of tune.

Additionally, all the tones of the *gamelan* are of a fixed pitch, which means that the strings and winds (which have variable pitch) must adjust in interesting ways to the scale of the *gamelan*. Likewise, the contrast of the percussive timbres of the *gamelan* with the sustained tones of strings and winds offers many textural and orchestrational opportunities. The differences also extend to interval size – unlike the intervals of diatonic harmony, Balinese *gamelan* pitches are unequal, consisting of intervals both larger and smaller than whole steps and half steps.

In addition to these musical challenges, the musicians also confronted differing interpretations of certain musical and dramatic passages. For example, to Richard Marriott, the major pentatonicism of the *gamelan angklung* conveyed a sense of peace. But for Balinese, this *gamelan* is associated with death rituals, and its sonority evokes feelings of sadness and melancholy. For I Made Subandi, there were unexpected issues that arose in providing the appropriate music to accompany the various dance and ritual scenes presented in the film. Even considering the recorded examples of Balinese music by Colin McPhee and a few others from the 1920s and 1930s, it is difficult to know how Balinese *gong kebyar* music sounded in the early 1930s, since there is significant continuous development and stylistic evolution in this oral (non-notated) tradition. For I Made Subandi, then, the compositional process involved extrapolating backward to discover the best tempi, melodic figurations, and accent patterns to fit each context in the film. Also, because the film was not edited in accordance with the logical flow of musical sequences, Subandi had to deal with editing discontinuities in the film – especially when the ensembles were playing music to accompany dance segments.

Both musical directors met these challenges with an evocative and wholly appropriate score for this unique and historically important film. The *gamelan gong kebyar*, the *gender wayang*, and the *gamelan angklung* provide a vivid aural soundscape to accompany the lavish dance and ritual scenes. The pentatonic motifs and lush themes in the strings and winds both support and enhance the Balinese instruments while providing a subtle backdrop for the film’s tragic plot. Ultimately, the collaboration between Gamelan Sekar Jaya and the Clubfoot Orchestra is a resounding success.

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### **Gamelan Sekar Jaya and the Clubfoot Orchestra**

Gamelan Sekar Jaya is a nonprofit performing arts organization composed of San Francisco Bay Area artists dedicated to the study and performance of Balinese music and dance. Since the group’s inception in 1979, Gamelan Sekar Jaya has invited many of Bali’s finest composers, musicians, and dancers to join the group for residencies as Guest Artistic Directors. The ensemble has presented more than 400 concerts throughout California and has traveled to the Pacific Northwest, the East Coast, Canada, Mexico, and Indonesia (tours to Bali in 1985,

1992, 1995, and 2000). Gamelan Sekar Jaya also offers an extensive outreach program including workshops, lecture-demonstrations, and school programs in Balinese music and dance.

The group has commissioned more than fifty new music and dance works by Balinese and American artists. In recent years it has also collaborated with other artists and organizations in a variety of unique projects. These have included two symphony orchestras (Oakland East Bay Symphony and the California Symphony), a Bay Area quintet of percussionists, singers, and dancers (Keith Terry's "Crosspulse"), a theater company specializing in innovative shadow-lighting techniques (Larry Reed's "ShadowLight Productions"), and a South Indian dance troupe (the Abhinaya Dance Company, in the 1997 dance drama *Ramayana*).

Club Foot Orchestra, under the artistic direction of Richard Marriott, is an ensemble that has "pioneered the modern use of live music in silent film" (*Chicago Tribune*, 11 November 1989). The orchestra has written and performed soundtracks for six feature films: Robert Weine's *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1919), F. W. Murnau's *Nosferatu* (1922), Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926), Buster Keaton's *Sherlock Jr.* (1924), P.W. Pabst's *Pandora's Box* (1928), and Weine's *The Hands of Orlac* (1924). In addition to these feature-length films, the orchestra has also scored eight short-subject films. In 1995 Club Foot scored and recorded a 13-episode animated series produced for CBS-TV (*The Twisted Tales of Felix the Cat*).

The orchestra made its debut appearance in June 1983, under the name "Orchestra FOOT a dentra la Boca," at the infamous San Francisco performance art hothouse, the "Club Foot" (2520 Third Street). Four years of club dates and two albums later, the CFO attempted its first silent movie performance. Since then, the CFO has performed hundreds of sold-out performances, primarily at San Francisco's prestigious Castro Theatre, but also at the Smithsonian Institution, the Walter Reade Theater at Lincoln Center, New Music America at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, and the NuArt Theater in Santa Monica.

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