

The University Musical Society



of
The University of Michigan

Presents

TOPENG

THE MASKED DANCE THEATER OF BALI

with

DJIMAT

BERTONG

SADEG

and

GAMELAN ORCHESTRA

in

“The End of King Bungkut”

TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 1973, AT 8:30

RACKHAM AUDITORIUM, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

PROGRAM

Introduction of Masks—The *Pengempat*

Chief Minister
Minister
Old Man

First Scene—

First Servant (A Buffoon)
Second Servant (A Buffoon)
Sri Dalem Sagening, The King of Gelgel
Djelantik, The Chief Minister
Djelantik's Wife
Boatman

INTERMISSION

Second Scene—Arrival at the Island of Nusa Penida

Servant
Djelantik
Bendesa Nusa, a delegate of the people of Nusa Penida
Blindman
Stutterer
Boaster
Deafman
Flirtatious Woman
Villager
Djelantik
Dalem Bungkut, The King of Nusa Penida

Special essay on The Asian Theater and Dance available in the lobby.

PROGRAM NOTES

In the Introduction of Masks (The *Pengempat*) the three *tōpèng* dancers appear in the masks of a chief minister, a minister, and an old man. Such an introduction is customary before a play begins. The particular masks shown do not necessarily depict characters in the play that follows. The introduction serves simply as a display of the masks. In the first scene, The King of Gelgel, Sri Dalem Sagening, has been asked by a delegate from the island of Nusa Penida to help his people who are suffering under the harsh rule of Dalen Bungkut. The King has agreed to send his chief minister, Djelantik, to Nusa Penida to fight Dalem Bungkut. He discusses the mission with Djelantik and presents him with a *kris* (dagger) to help him defeat the wicked king. Djelantik's wife, when bidding him farewell, gives him a small magic *kris*, to be used as a last resort in battle. Djelantik sets off for the island of Nusa Penida on a fishing boat, and is met by the people's delegate, Bendesa Nusa, and a host of villagers. When Djelantik arrives at Dalem Bungkut's Palace, the latter, being an honorable man, invites Djelantik to dine with him before they battle. They begin to duel, and at first Bungkut is winning, but then Djelantik remembers his wife's gift, the magic *kris*. As he draws it out, Bungkut recognizes it as supernatural, and knows his death is near. He prays in preparation for death. Djelantik plunges the dagger into Bungkut's body. He has fulfilled his mission.

Tōpèng is the "Chronicle Play" of Bali. The word *tōpèng* means "something pressed against"—in this case, the face—in other words, a mask. The masks are made of wood (pule—the cinchona tree), and portray a variety of characters, from kings to buffoons. A white or yellow face usually means a good and noble person, but the look of the mask has to be noble as well. A red-tinted face means a person easily angered. Villagers and buffoons usually have brownish faces. Protruding eyes mean greed, natural-looking eyes are for noblemen, and a large mouth represents arrogance. Noble characters have delicate, fine moustaches. Costumes are not considered of prime importance in the mask-play, since each actor plays many roles in the same costume and just changes his mask, so that a minister may wear the same costume as a king. Buffoons wear half-masks, which enable them to speak, in contrast to the noblemen who wear full masks and only perform in pantomime. The buffoons interpret the actions of these noblemen for the audience. The masks are treated with much reverence, and the actors take time before each performance to dedicate an offering to the gods.

The *gamelan* orchestra accompanying this play consists of four *gangsa* (metallophones), one *réjong* (a single row of twelve gong chimes), one *gong ageng* (a large gong), one *kempur* (a small gong), two *kendang* (drums played with the palm of the hand and a drum-stick made of ebony or coconut, with a head made of horn or wood), and one *tjèng-tjèng* (pair of brass cymbals). The instruments serve to underline the mood of the play and the emotions of the characters. They also announce a change in plot, such as the arrival of a new character, or the beginning of a battle. The two drummers, one of whom also serves as the conductor of the orchestra, must be constantly alert to the stage action, since much of it is improvised. Buried in the drum patterns are signals which govern the movement of the music—its speed, intensity, and so forth. The melody which is associated with a particular dance is repeated over and over again until the actor has completed his dance or stage business.

TOPÈNG DANCE THEATER OF BALI

I MADÉ DJIMAT, who heads the troupe, comes from a family of famous dancers. His mother was a dancer at thirteen, and at the age of eighteen began to teach. His father is a master of *gambuh* (the most ancient form of Balinese dance), *baris* (a martial dance), and mask dance. At the age of five, Djimat showed such talent and promise that his father began to teach him to dance. As a small child he made his debut as a *baris* dancer during a temple ceremony and aroused much admiration among the audience. Since that time he has frequently been invited to dance in other villages, and has developed and mastered other types of dance.

During a dance contest in 1966, which included dancers from all over Bali, he was the first prize winner for the *baris* dance, and two years later he received first prize for his mask dance. Then he began his career as a dance instructor. He presently teaches various types of dance in many villages. In 1970 he joined the dance group which went to the Australian Adelaide Festival, and a few months later went to the Ruhr Festival in Germany. In 1971 he returned to Australia with the well-known *gamelan* orchestra from Peliatan. His most recent appearance abroad was in Hong Kong, in 1971.

I KETUT BERTONG studied dancing and shadow-play since childhood with his father. At the age of ten he began to amuse audiences of children his own age by performing shadow-plays. With his loud, clear voice, Bertong is usually cast as first buffoon in the masked plays. He is also a member of the *barong* (mythical beast) dance association of his own village. Owing to his knowledge of ancient customs and incantations, he has been chosen a temple priest by the villagers. Since 1961 he has been in the employ of the local government as a dancer.

I NJOMAN SADÈG began to study carving and painting of puppets at the age of nine, in addition to helping his father, a shadow-play performer. He began to study various kinds of dance, including the masked dance, at which he excelled. His specialty is acting as a narrator, thanks to his knowledge of *Kawi* (ancient Javanese) and local historical events. During the *tōpèng* performance, he takes the part of a buffoon, or interpreter. He works for the local government, and as a member of a cultural group, he has made frequent tours out of Bali.

The material for these program notes is based on the following: "*Tōpèng, The Masked Dance Theater of Bali*," by Dr. Ruby Ornstein in *Essays on Asian Theater and Dance* (New York: The Performing Arts Program of the Asia Society, 1972)

Dance and Drama in Bali by Beryl de Zoete and Walter Spies (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1958)

Next year's Asian Series of four programs to be announced April 1st. Inquire at the Musical Society for complete 1973-74 season brochure.

REMAINING EVENTS

- NATIONAL BALLET, "Sleeping Beauty" Saturday, March 31
Sunday, April 1
(Power Center)
- LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Friday, April 6
ANDRÉ PREVIN, *Conductor* (8:30, Hill Auditorium)
- WALTON: Portsmouth Point Overture; VAUGHAN WIL-
LIAMS: Symphony No. 3; BRAHMS: Symphony 2

80TH MAY FESTIVAL PROGRAMS AND ARTISTS

Four Concerts — May 2, 3, 4, and 5, 1973

THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA at all concerts,

EUGENE ORMANDY, *Conductor*

THE UNIVERSITY CHORAL UNION — THOR JOHNSON, *Guest Conductor*

Soloists: RUDOLF SERKIN, JESSYE NORMAN, VAN CLIBURN, ISAAC STERN

PROGRAMS:

- May 2: ALL-BEETHOVEN—Overture to "Leonore" No. 3; Concerto No. 4 for Piano and Orchestra, Mr. Serkin, soloist; Symphony No. 3 ("Eroica").
- May 3: Brahms: Symphony No. 4 in E minor; Strauss: "Ein Heldenleben."
- May 4: Verdi: "Stabat Mater" and "Te Deum," University Choral Union; La Montaine: Songs of the Rose of Sharon; Wagner: "Du bist der Lenz" from *Die Walküre*, and "Dich teure Halle" from *Tannhäuser*, Miss Norman, soprano soloist; Rachmaninoff: Concerto No. 2 for Piano and Orchestra, Mr. Cliburn, soloist.
- May 5: Wagner: Prelude to *Parsifal*; Beethoven: Romance No. 1 for Violin and Orchestra; Mozart: Concerto No. 1, K. 207, for Violin and Orchestra, Mr. Stern, soloist; Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 4, in F minor.

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