

3 Indonesian Gamelan

FACT SHEET

Indonesia has a long and rich history of music which can be traced back to the third century. It is a mix of Indian, Arabian and Asian styles and uses many different types of instruments which gives it its unique sound which can be very foreign sounding to Western ears. Because the nation is made up of over 17,000 islands, there are _____ of different styles of music, but the most important and popular World Music style to come out of Indonesia is called G_____. There are several styles which come from different Indonesian Islands, but the most common styles are from J____ and it's neighboring island of B____.

In Indonesian, the word gamelan means 'to ___ or _____' and is an ensemble of approximately fifteen mostly metallic percussion instruments with gong or "bell" like sounds. It is an integral part of any important Indonesian ritual or ceremony such as weddings, birthdays and funerals, meditation, cleansing rituals and social community events. It is also the music which accompanies the traditional form of puppet theatre in Indonesia called W_____.



The instruments of the gamelan are built and tuned to a specific scale and each gamelan set only plays in ____ scale. Each gamelan has an individual and authentic sound to it and is tuned to either a five note scale called _____ or a seven note scale called a _____.

In the middle of the ensemble are the main melody instruments which are called the _____. This section of the ensemble includes bronze metallophones called _____ and _____.

The balungan(main melody) is punctuated by the larger gongs called the _____ and _____. The horizontally-mounted gongs are called the kenong, kethuk and kempyang at the back of the gamelan.

The front section of the ensemble embellish the main melody and includes instruments such as the _____ (a collection of small gongs mounted on a frame), and _____ (multi octave metallophone).

The whole gamelan is co-ordinated by the drummer in the centre of the ensemble, playing a selection of _____ (double-headed drums).

Gamelan music is often _____ or _____ in nature which means the same rhythms and melodies are often used over again and again and are indicated by the strikes of the gong. Some people believe that the Gamelan can lead the mind into a deep trance and help with meditation.

When the famous composer Claude D_____ first heard Gamelan music at a world fair in 1889, he spent hours listening to it, transcribing melodies and examining the instruments and their tunings. After he heard this style of music, he used a whole tone scale for the first time and used this idea in his own compositions from this time on.