

ÇUDAMANI, the 26-member music & dance ensemble from Bali, Indonesia presents ODALAN BALI featuring **cutting edge new works as well as rare classical forms of Gamelan repertoire.**

ON TOUR

ODALAN BALI:
An offering of Music & Dance

USA/Canada (Oct-Nov '07)
www.cudamani.org



Bali is known worldwide for its music and dance. But in the village of Ubud, in Pengosekan a new music is forging ahead: Çudamani's bold and cutting edge music compositions and dance choreography is created collaboratively and resonates with both traditional and contemporary audiences. Never performing solely to entertain tourists, the 26 member Çudamani ensemble will travel to USA and Canada this fall, to present it's critically acclaimed production of "*Odalan Bali: An Offering of Music and Dance*" in twelve cities from Oct 18 – Nov 19, 2007.

“(Cudamani) quietly rebels against the formats that traditionally shape folkloric performances...” “there is no doubt that the performance brought us closer to the essence of a culture than most touring or touristic performances ever can, making us question and perhaps reject the ways that non-western or pre-Western traditions are commonly presented on our stages.” **Lewis Segal, Los Angeles Times**

The island of Bali is home to the vast majority of Indonesia's small Hindu minority. It is also the largest tourist destination in the country, Particularly in Ubud, the famous tourist town just north of Pengosekan. By the 1990s most of the musicians of Ubud were playing for tourists. Today, orchestras that perform only for tourists have been increasingly luring the best young musicians into playing solely for tourists and moving away from any connection with the religious and communal life of the village. The youth of Pengosekan often found themselves working in this system experiencing the financial benefits of tourism while also being keenly aware of the artistic and cultural dangers of this arrangement.

As a response, in 1997, brothers- **Dewa Putu Berata and Dewa Ketut Alit** called together a number of talented and promising young people from different areas in Bali to form Sanggar Çudamani as an alternative to the groups formed to solely entertain tourists. The *sanggar* today is a powerhouse of cultural and educational activity and creativity complete with studios, classes, workshops, and rehearsal space. The members range in age from 18 to 35. Aware of the dangers of performing solely for tourists, Çudamani is dedicated to *ayah*, or devotional service, contributing performances of artistic excellence at temple ceremonies and other religious festivals. These bring little or no money, but reconnect artists to the

community and temples in which music and dance have played an integral role for centuries. Çudamani teach its youth for free and is one of the few groups that teach the girls to play Gamelan music.

New Music: Cudamani has seen its creative work grow in two directions: exploring and preserving its most basic roots, and exploring new areas, through teaching, collaboration and new creativity. Their music reflects their approach to life as they co-mingle the ancient and modern, globalization and spirituality. The musicians play on a hybrid gamelan orchestra "Semarandana" which was created in the 1980s. With seven tones rather than the usual five, this special gamelan allows the freedom to play in rare modes, more derived from older court and ritual gamelan. This type of ensemble is still quite rare in Bali, and Çudamani is on the forefront of work in this style. Cudamani has performed in US, Greece, Europe and Japan. They have collaborated with master musicians, scholars and ethnomusicologists from around the world.

Dance: Dances performed by the group include the classic *Legong*, rare pieces in the *Kebyar* genre, and new choreography. Their outstanding musicianship and dance technique add weight to the revival of classic works. In addition, their efforts demonstrate a respect for and dedication to the senior masters who are too often dismissed as outdated by the young tourist- oriented artists of Bali. The dancers' bodies mirror every musical nuance of the gamelan as they bring to life vivid tales of gods and heroes of Balinese mythology and history.

Program:

Odalan Bali: An Offering of Music and Dance

It is extremely rare for an Indonesian ensemble to tour a production of this virtuosity and scale. Çudamani's *Odalan Bali* offers the American audience an unimaginable opportunity to witness an Odalan first hand. The Balinese *Odalan* is a temple ceremony that commemorates the beginning of a life. The main function of an Odalan, like all ceremonies, is to create and maintain harmony and balance.

From the clamor of villagers working at dawn to the calm of prayer and worship, and from the meditative resonance of voice and flute to the virtuosic dances for which Bali is famous, Çudamani's (pronounced SOOD-a-mani), original evening-length work traces the life of a ceremony from the awakening of the ritual site, to purification, and finally to spiritual union.

In ACT 1, the village awakens to the quiet sounds of hand made brooms and birds. Men and women prepare the sacred ground for the ceremony. Starting out quietly the rhythm or activity picks up and the scene quickly transforms into a musical crescendo of percussive sound of the brooms and chants to create the energy of the *Mebat* (*awakening*).

ACT 2 is the time when the deities descend in a spectacular unification of the divine, human and nature. A rowdy cockfight to appease the spirits – *Buta Kala* deploys techniques of chanting with interlocking vocal sounds accompanied by symbols and gongs. This is followed by the revered *legong*, an ancient dance style that celebrates youthful femininity and grace.

The invigorating *Truna Gandrung* dance represents the shifting moods, spirit and playful exuberance of youth. Here the relationship between dancer and gamelan quickly intensifies. This dance is accompanied by the most complex and virtuosic gamelan music.

One of most transformative moments in the produciton is an enormous lion-like gaurdian called the "*barong*," which makes its dramatic appearance in the second act. In the end, the beast is appeased; day light has given way to dusk - the priest sprinkles holy water, covers the crowns and calm sets in like a rolling wave.

Çudamani's Odalan Bali is not only about mythology, but an expression of Balinese spirituality and community. One of the goals of Cudamani is to recontextualize their arts within this theatrical narrative and demonstrate how powerful symbols like the masks and the mythical beasts are not just exotic objects but actually worshipped in the temple with their own place of honor.

Odalan Bali 2007 USA/Canada Tour is Co produced by Interdependent Productions & UCLA Center for Intercultural Performance; the New York performances are presented in association with Skirball Center for the Performing Arts at New York University, Asia Society and Gamelan Dharma Swara.

October 19 Hill Auditorium, University of Michigan - Ann Arbor, MI
October 22 Bailey Hall, Cornell University - Ithaca, NY
October 25 Modlin Center for the Arts, University of Richmond - Richmond, VA
October 27-28 Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, New York University
October 29 Long Island University (Workshop) School of Visual & Performing Arts
October 31 Juilliard School - NYC (Workshop)
November 2 Swarthmore College - Swarthmore, PA
November 3 The Painted Bride Arts Center - Philadelphia, PA
November 4 Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts - Annapolis, MD
November 9-10 Meany Hall for the Performing Arts, University of Washington - Seattle, WA
November 12 Chan Center for the Performing Arts, University of British Columbia - Vancouver, BC
November 16 Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, UC Davis - Davis, CA
November 18 UCLA Royce Hall - Los Angeles, CA
November 19 Pomona College - Pomona, CA (Workshop)

In 2005 “Odalan Bali” toured USA under the auspices of the World Music Institute and with a portion of the music commissioned by the Savannah Music Festival. In addition to touring the United States, Çudamani has performed across Italy and Greece including the 2003 Cultural Olympiad in Greece and the World EXPO in Aichi, Japan. In summer 2007, Cudamani will for the first time host a select group of 35 musicians and dancers from around the world to participate in the study of Balinese music and dance in Bali. In 2001 Çudamani received a grant from the Ford Foundation for its work in preservation, innovation and education.

Artistic Team:

The performance features a stellar array of 26 artists including choreography and composition by:

I DEWA PUTU BERATA, the artistic director was born into a family of musicians and painters and studied under his father I Dewa Nyoman Sura. He is the founding member of Çudamani comprised of 60 members and has directed numerous *gamelan* ensembles and works on various international projects throughout the world. **I NYOMAN CERITA**, Choreographer, learned dance at age 6 from his grandparent I Made Kenyir. He is recipient of numerous awards as well as from Titane Soectacles/Le Jardin Des Poiries in Paris. **EMIKO SARASWATI SUSILO**, was one of Çudamani's founding members. She began her formal studies in Javanese and Balinese dance under the direction of KRT Sasmintadipura and Ni Made Wiratini. She has studied Javanese singing from Tri Haryanto and Midiyanto. **I DEWA KETUT ALIT** studied drumming with his father and began performing at age 11. **WAYNE VITALE** (creator of ambient soundscapes) is a composer, performer, scholar, teacher and director of Gamelan Sekar Jaya, a California-based ensemble.

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