



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 7, 2007

### **Cornish Music Series Presents Gamelan Pacifica: Celebrating 25 Years of Gamelan in Seattle**

SEATTLE, WA – Cornish College of the Arts Music Series presents Gamelan Pacifica:

#### **Gamelan Pacifica: Celebrating 25 Years of Gamelan in Seattle**

April 6-7, 8 pm

PONCHO Concert Hall at Kerry Hall, 710 East Roy Street, Seattle

Tickets: \$15 general; \$7.50 students, alumni and seniors

For tickets contact Ticket Window at (206) 325.6500, [www.ticketwindowonline.com](http://www.ticketwindowonline.com) or at Ticket Window box offices located at Pacific Place, Broadway Market, Pike Place Market, Bellevue's Meydenbauer Center

#### **About the Performance**

Gamelan Pacifica, under the direction of Jarrad Powell, celebrates a 25-year history of gamelan music in Seattle. Begun in 1980 at Cornish through an instrument building workshop, it became of full-fledged independent ensemble and non-profit arts organization a couple of years later. A special feature of the concert will be the premiere of several new works commissioned specifically for the occasion with funding provided by the Paul Allen Family Foundation. The music will include innovative new works for Javanese gamelan, a new work for an experimental set of Balinese-style instruments built recently in Seattle under the direction of I Wayan Sinti, a Balinese inspired piece for two marimbas, and much more. Special guest performers will include Sutrisno Hartana, and members of Sekar Jaya, the Balinese gamelan from the Bay Area directed by composer Wayne Vitali. Gamelan Sekar Jaya and Gamelan Pacifica share a kinship, having been founded at almost the same time, one following the Balinese tradition and the other the Javanese tradition.

#### **About Gamelan Pacifica**

Gamelan Pacifica was among the first ensembles to develop the resources to create and perform gamelan music in the U.S. Gamelan music originated in Indonesia and Gamelan Pacifica not only explores the music of Indonesia but also explores gamelan as a new compositional resource and a form of musical expression in the U.S. The group has a reputation for creating diverse productions merging traditional and contemporary musical forms with dance, theater, puppetry, and visual media. Many contemporary musicians interested in non-western music, saw gamelan as a natural outgrowth and an extension of the "drums along the Pacific" percussion movement that started in the late 1930's by American composers John Cage and Lou Harrison. In 1981, Harrison became Gamelan Pacifica's first significant guest composer and after a week-long residency, a concert featuring the premier of Harrison's *Scenes for Cavafy* was performed. As a non-profit organization, Gamelan Pacifica has received funding from major granting organizations including the National Endowment for the Arts and has acquired two additional sets of gamelan instruments from Java, performed and toured regularly throughout the Northwest, and achieved wider recognition with appearances before the Vancouver New Music Society and the Vancouver Expo in Canada, the New Music Across American Festival, the Walker Art Center and the Steppenwolf Theater. The ensemble has also been recognized by the Smithsonian Institute's Festival of Indonesia as one of three sites to bring notable artists from Indonesia together to collaborate on music, dance, and theater projects. In 1994, Gamelan Pacifica released a CD titled *Trance Gong* which received international acclaim.

## Artist Bios

### Jarrad Powell

Jarrad Powell works as a composer in a variety of media, including electroacoustic, chamber music, gamelan, and music for theater and dance. For over 25 years, he has been directly involved with Javanese gamelan music as a composer, director, and performer. He has collaborated with many noted Indonesian artists both here and in Indonesia and created compositions and theater pieces that are considered landmarks in the gamelan movement in this country. In her 1998 article on contemporary gamelan music *Out of Indonesia: Global Gamelan*, published in *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 42, No.1, Jody Diamond wrote, "Jarrad Powell's *Gending Erhu* is an exquisite example of how instruments from different parts of the world can sound like they were made to be played together." On Powell's collaborative piece, *Visible Religion*, she adds, "Gamelan Pacifica's shadow theater work *Visible Religion*, is an inspiring example of collaboration across genres as well as nations." Powell's work has been commissioned by On the Boards, the Walker Art Center, Performing Arts Chicago, the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, as well as by a number of individual performers. His work is recorded on Present Sounds Recordings, O.O. Discs, Periplum, Sparkling Beatnik, Mode Records, New Albion, and the Leonard Music Journal. Awards include the Artist Trust Fellowship and the Creative Capital Foundation, just to name a few. He is currently Professor of Music at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle.

### Sutrisno Hartana

Sutrisno Hartana is one of Java's most accomplished gamelan musicians, celebrated as both a teacher and performer. His training includes traditional Javanese music, dance, singing, shadow puppetry, and new music composition. Hartana's love of gamelan started early and his early experience in learning and associating with Javanese traditional arts reflects a traditional cultural process. He developed as a singer of the Javanese poetry known as tembang and has won singing competitions in Yogyakarta province sponsored by the Yogyakarta palace and the Paku Alaman palace. In March 2004, Hartana was recognized as an official court musician and member of the royal palace of the Paku Alaman where he received the title, mas Lurah Lebda Swara, a special title given by the Javanese King. His tours in Asia, Europe and North America have included lecture demonstrations, workshops and performances and he currently teaches at the School for the Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.

### Wayne Vitale

Wayne Vitale (director, Gamelan Sekar Jaya) is a composer, performer, and scholar whose work has focused on Balinese music for the past 25 years. During this time, he has spent more than 7 years in Bali (supported in part by an NEH Fellowship for Independent Scholars) studying, composing, performing, and documenting Balinese music. His compositions for Balinese gamelan are known throughout Bali through live performances, cassette recordings, and television programs, and have impacted the evolution of modern Balinese kebyar music. His work has been supported by grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Lutz Foundation, and Meet the Composer. Under his direction, Gamelan Sekar Jaya has developed into a performing ensemble of unparalleled reputation. The fifty-member group has engaged in many large-scale creative projects, including collaborations with a wide range of artists and organizations. It sponsors long-term artistic residencies of acclaimed Balinese artists, and an extensive educational program. It is also recognized internationally as "the finest Balinese gamelan outside of Bali" (*Tempo* magazine, Indonesia), and has been awarded a Dharma Kusuma, Bali's highest award for artistic achievement which had never been awarded to a foreign group before.

### Gamelan Padma Sari and I Wayan Sinti

Gamelan Padma Sari is a Balinese gamelan sekaa in Seattle founded by I Wayan Sinti. Sinti is known worldwide for his compositions for gong kebyar, gong gede, pelegongan, semar pegulingan, belegangur, and various vocal genres. During his four decades as an instructor at KOKAR, Sinti taught many of the younger generation of Balinese musicians, and his influence as a teacher, performer, and composer is evident throughout Bali today. Since 1957, Sinti has studied many kinds of Balinese vocal music with teachers that include I Nyoman Gerana and Ida Pedanda Made Sideman. In addition, he has studied almost all of the Balinese instrumental ensembles from musicians like I Nyoman Kaler and I Wayan Lotring. I Wayan Sinti has worked to revive the combined performance of ritual vocal music (kidung) and gamelan gambang, a practice that had been forgotten in Bali since the turn of the 20th century. He has also created a

new type of gamelan ensemble called Manikasanti, which means “jewel for peace.” Manikasanti features a new tuning that allows for the playing of various Balinese modes and musical styles, and was inspired by his long study of ritual vocal and instrumental music. Sinti has performed in Korea, China, Japan, Australia, Singapore, Canada, France, Belgium, and Holland and he has received awards from the Mayor of Denpasar, the Governor of Bali, and the President of Indonesia. Currently, he is building a new gamelan, called Siwa Nada (nine tones) in Seattle and is teaching Balinese vocal music and gamelan gambuh at the School of Music at the University of Washington.

### **About Cornish College of the Arts**

Cornish College of the Arts provides aspiring artists with the educational opportunities to become professionals in their fields. The College offers Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees in Art, Dance, Design, Performance Production and Theater, and a Bachelor of Music degree. It is one of three private colleges in the United States focusing on both the performing and visual arts, and the only college of its kind in the Northwest. The College is accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, and the National Association of Schools of Art and Design and has a national reputation for its faculty, curriculum, and student performance and exhibition opportunities.

Since its founding by Nellie Cornish in 1914, Cornish College of the Arts has contributed to the nation’s cultural and intellectual heritage through its alumni and faculty. Historically, these figures include choreographers and dancers Merce Cunningham, Martha Graham, Syvilla Fort and Bonnie Bird; composer John Cage; painters Mark Tobey, William Cumming, and William Ivey; photographer Imogen Cunningham; educator Calvin B. Cady and broadcaster Chet Huntley, to name just a few. More recently these figures are joined by Brendan Fraser (film actor), Patrick Haskett (painter), Steve Jenson (sculptor), Paul Owen Lewis (illustrator), Lois Rathvon McCarter (dancer/choreographer), Evyind Kang (violinist/composer), Jarrad Powell and Joshua Kohl (composers). And, the College continues to represent the Northwest’s largest concentration of professional artists dedicated to instruction.

- END -