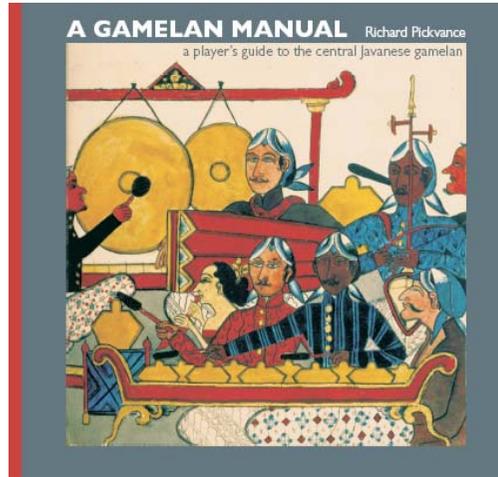


## A GAMELAN MANUAL: a player's guide to the central Javanese gamelan

by Richard Pickvance

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## A GAMELAN MANUAL a player's guide to the central Javanese gamelan

*A Gamelan Manual* is the first comprehensive description of the performance practice of the central Javanese gamelan.

Aimed mainly at the many gamelan players in the West, the book will also appeal to composers and music-lovers wanting a detailed description of one of the world's major musical cultures, and to teachers interested in new resources for music in schools.

While the basic approach of the book is practical, there is also background material that should help players to understand not only what they are playing but why they are playing it. Much of the book's content is otherwise difficult to find, even in Java, where teaching methods were informal until quite recently.

Part 1 'sets the scene' for Westerners, by introducing the cultural background to musical performance in central Java.

Part 2 deals in general terms with the musical material played by the gamelan, and describes the various fundamental principles on which it is based. It also explains the principal notation system used, and the differences between the standard forms of compositions.

Part 3 focuses on the instruments. Each instrument is dealt with individually and as a member of a group with a wider function. Performance practice is outlined for all instruments. For the easier instruments the coverage is more detailed, including the Yogyakarta style for the *bonang* and *peking* in addition to the Surakarta style. This part also deals with the interactions between two or three instruments within the ensemble, and the different ways in which the instruments are combined into ensembles. Numerous illustrations and helpful tips for beginners are included, with the aim of helping players to get maximum benefit out of their actual playing time.

Part 4 is a select library of notation for specific pieces, with notes on details of performance practice, including drumming, to show the application of the principles described earlier.

Then comes a glossary of about 2400 entries, intended both to support the rest of the book and to help readers continuing their studies elsewhere. Most of the appendices are of specialised interest, and have been excluded from the printed book to keep the cost down: these plus other relevant material will be available to owners of the book via the associated website.

Previous books on the central Javanese gamelan mainly fall into three categories: in-depth studies by Western scholars on limited topics, often derived from theses; brief introductions for Westerners interested in the gamelan but not necessarily in playing it; and primers written in Indonesian for the school market. *A Gamelan Manual* at last meets the need for a detailed practical guide for players in the West.

