

Ngaben (for Sari Club)

for Balinese gamelan and orchestra

by

Evan Ziporyn

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Ngaben (for Sari Club)

Duration: @14 minutes

Instrumentation (see notes):

Balinese gamelan gong kebyar, including:

- 1 ugal
- 4 kantil (small gangsa) (sounds 8va)
- 4 pemade (large gangsa)
- 4 reong
- 2 jublag
- 2 penyecah (optional – see notes)
- 2 jegogan
- 1 gong set (see notes)
- 1 ceng-ceng
- 1 kendang (preferably kebyar, lanang or wadon)
- 1 kempli
- 1 gentorak

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

2 Clarinets in B-flat

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

2 Trumpets

2 Trombones

2 Harps (w/5 retuned strings)

Strings

Ngaben (for Sari Club) was premiered in Jordan Hall, Boston, by Gamelan Galak Tika and the New England Conservatory Philharmonic, Dante Anzolini, music director, as the closing concert of NEC's 2003 Annual Festival. It was commissioned by the New England Conservatory with the additional support of the NIB Foundation. It was released on New Albion records in fall of 2005.

Program notes by the composer:

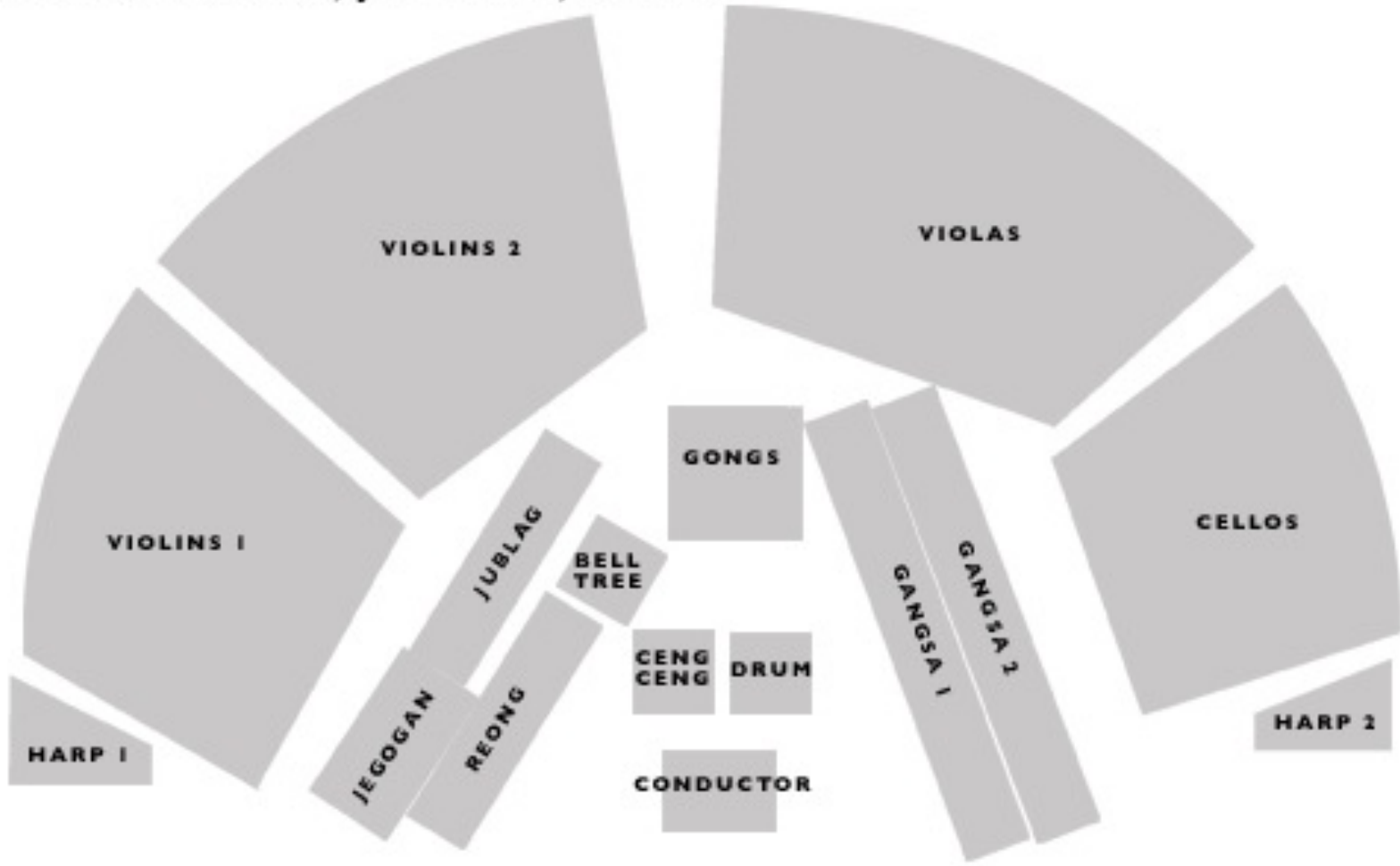
A terrorist bomb destroyed the Sari Club in Kuta Beach, Bali on October 12, 2002. I had just begun working on a very different type of piece for gamelan and orchestra, but the printed images of Balinese women crying and praying at the blast site overwhelmed me and changed the direction of the music.

The *ngaben* cremation is the last and most important life ritual in Balinese Hinduism. Like a traditional New Orleans funeral, it encompasses a wide range of emotions. The entire village participates, preparations are extensive, and the overall mood is decidedly unmournful. The loss is acknowledged, but it is subsumed by the far more important task of releasing the soul from the body. The procession itself is serious but chaotic and circuitous: the raised, highly ornamented sarcophagus must be spun around violently at all intersections in order to confuse evil spirits. The burning itself, where the soul ascends to await its next incarnation, follows this.

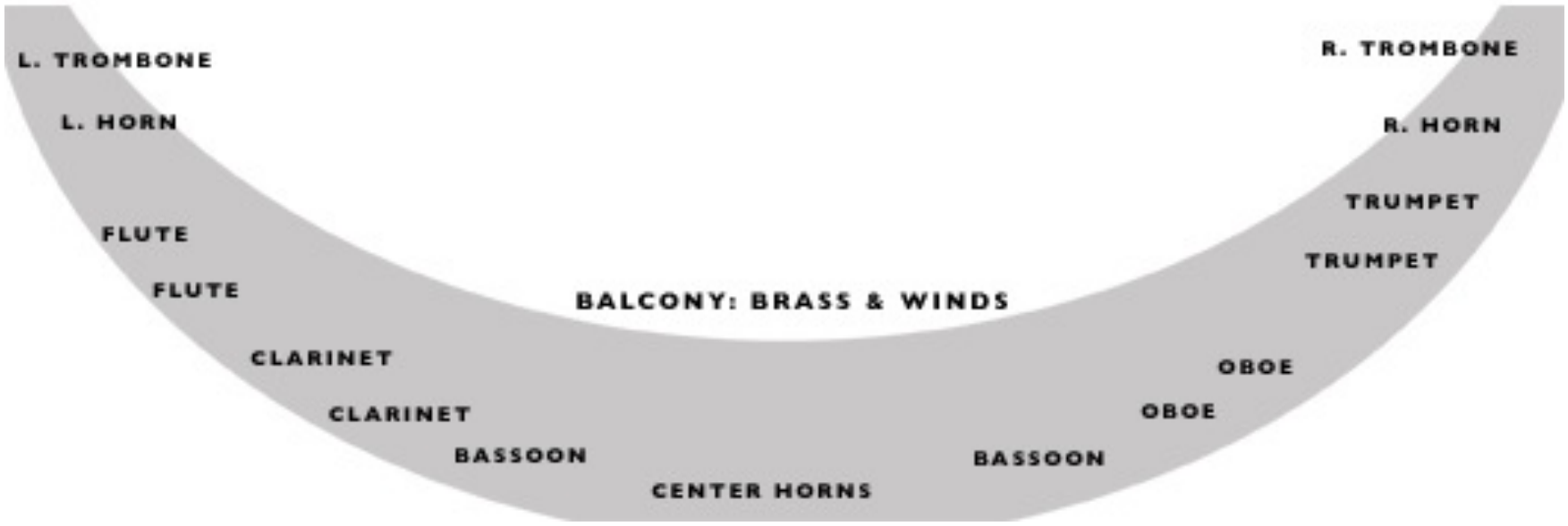
This *Ngaben* follows the same course, in ways that will be readily apparent. The two sections are fused together by a central *kebyar*, the highly charged, ametric-but-synchronous tutti which characterizes modern Balinese music.

Ironically, the term *kebyar* means 'explosion,' though it is normally described as a flower bursting into bloom, or a flash of lightning in the sky. Historically, *kebyar* arose in response to the violent takeover of Bali by the Dutch at the dawn of the 20th century; that tragedy thus sparked a renaissance of art and cross-cultural exchange on the island which has lasted until this day. This piece, a response to the violence which starts this century, is a small offering in the hope that the east-west exchange will continue undaunted.

**Stage and Balcony Layout for Ngaben,
Premiere Performance, Jordan Hall, 3/12/03**



STAGE: GAMELAN & STRINGS



BALCONY: BRASS & WINDS

Ngaben (for Sari Club)

Evan Ziporyn

$\text{♩} = 70$
simple, weighted but not heavy

Gangsa (Kantil/Pemade) *mp*

Jublag *all notes l.v.*

Jegogan

Top Reong

Bottom Reong

Ceng2/Kendang

Kempli

Gongs

Flute 1

Flute 2

Oboe 1

Oboe 2

Clarinet in B \flat 1

Clarinet in B \flat 2

Bassoon

L.Horn in F *expressive and resonant*
mp

L.Trombone

Ctr. Hn. in F 1

Ctr. Hn. in F 2

Trumpet in C 1

Trumpet in C 2

R.Horn in F *expressive and resonant*
mp

R. Trombone

Harp 1

Harp 2

Violin I

Violin II

Viola *long lines*
mp

Cello

Contrabass

36 257

finish pattern before harps end

kti

pmd

jub

jeg

t.rng

b.rng

c2/kdg

kpl

gnsg

f1

f2

ob1

ob2

cl1

cl2

bsn

l.hn

l.tbn

c.hn1

c.hn2

C Tpt. 1

C Tpt. 2

r.hn

r.trb

hp1

hp2

first two desks only

first desk only

vln1

vln2

vla

vc

cb