

WESTERN AUSTRALIA - EAST JAVA **a developing relationship**

The gift of this magnificent gamelan orchestra will encourage greater Western Australian awareness and appreciation of Indonesian culture, especially the traditional culture of East Java.

The Sister-State relationship between East Java, Indonesia's fastest growing provincial economy, and Western Australia promises many benefits for both peoples.

Already, Western Australian businesses and government agencies have been able to provide East Java with valuable technical expertise and training while benefiting from opportunities to participate in the Province's impressive economic development.

Exchanges of cultural information and skills in fields such as music, including gamelan musicianship, dance, visual arts and library management have also been a vital part of this relationship.

Undoubtedly, as East Java and Western Australia develop, the nature of these economic and cultural exchanges will diversify.

The Western Australian government is committed to ensuring that throughout these changes the relationship will continue to strengthen.

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Gamelan Orchestra

**Laras Slendro and
Pelog Gamelan**



**A gift from the Government and people of the
Province of East Java, Indonesia to the
Government and people of its Sister-State,
Western Australia.**

The Gamelan Tradition

Gamelan gets its name from "gamel" a Javanese word for hammer and refers to the manner in which most of the instruments are played - by being struck.

The origins of gamelan can be traced back to bronze gongs used by South East Asian bronze-working cultures almost three thousand years ago.

According to Javanese tradition, in the beginning Sang Hyang Guru, God-King of Java, developed the gongs to summon all the gods together.

The gamelan tradition has survived the pervasive influences of Hindu and Islamic culture which affected many other aspects of Javanese life. It continues to prosper as Indonesia enters the 21st century.

Historically the gamelan was a part of "court culture", used only by members of the royal family and high government officials for auspicious ceremonies. It brought harmony to the court and thus to the State.

Nowadays its use is much more widespread. As well as featuring at important civic and religious occasions, the gamelan accompanies Wayang Kulit (shadow puppet) and traditional dance performances and enhances annual festivals and events.



Every gamelan orchestra is unique. It would be considered a grave insult if one sounded identical to another. Experienced musicians need specialised training to master the intricacies of a particular orchestra.

About the Gamelan Orchestra presented to Western Australia

This orchestra is a complete bronze Javanese gamelan orchestra or Laras Slendro and Pelog Gamelan.

It consists of 34 instruments and is made up of more than 500 pieces.

This gamelan has all the instruments necessary to play both the scales present in Indonesian music. A complete orchestra of this type can accompany a wide variety of performances and regional styles.

The orchestra was made specifically for Western Australia in the East Java town of Magetan which is renowned for gamelan manufacture.

It was presented by the Governor of East Java Province to the people of Western Australia in May 1993 to strengthen the Sister-State



relationship between East Java and Western Australia through cultural understanding and exchange.

For information about use and performance of the gamelan please contact;

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Management of the gamelan is overseen by the Department for the Arts, the Perth Theatre Trust and the Department of Commerce and Trade.

Photographs by Victor France

East Java Province

