February 17, 2012

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Cal Poly to Host UC Davis Gamelan Ensemble for Free Concert March 9

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The UC Davis Gamelan Ensemble will give a free performance at 3 p.m. Friday, March 9, in Room 218 of the Davidson Music Center at Cal Poly.

The ensemble will perform a selection of pieces on its West Javanese gamelan salendro as part of an exchange of ethnomusicology ensembles with Cal Poly. The ensemble will be joined by dancer Ben Arcangel, who will perform classical West Javanese dance.

The gamelan salendro consists of hanging bronze gongs, gong chimes, metallophones, drums and rebab (spike fiddle) tuned to a pentatonic scale. Gamelan salendro is associated with various theater and dance genres in West Java, Indonesia, and provides courtly listening music as well.

The UC Davis Gamelan Ensemble is directed by Ed Garcia, a percussionist whose expertise extends to Balinese and West Javanese gamelan. Garcia studied West Javanese gamelan with Undang Sumarna at UC Santa Cruz and holds a master's degree in percussion from California Institute of the Arts in Valencia.

The ensemble's faculty advisor is Henry Spiller, an ethnomusicologist whose research focuses on Sundanese music and dance from West Java. He is associate professor of music at UC Davis. He has studied Sundanese music and dance for more than 30 years and has conducted fieldwork in Bandung, West Java, on several occasions, including 10 months of Fulbright-sponsored dissertation research in 1998–99. Spiller holds a bachelor's degree in music from UC Santa Cruz, a master's in harp performance from Holy Names College, and a master's and doctorate in ethnomusicology from UC Berkeley.

The free concert is made possible by Cal Poly's Music Department and College of Liberal Arts. As part of the exchange, the Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble will perform at UC Davis in April.

For more information, call the Music Department at 805-756-2406.

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