

2-5-2009

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Recommended Citation

"Gamelan-a-rama" (2009). *News Releases*. 1585.
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Gamelan-a-rama

02.05.2009 | Fine Arts

UD began unpacking an 8,000-pound "gong orchestra" from Indonesia Jan. 26, boosting access to world music at UD and in the Dayton area.

The collection, called a gamelan, requires about 15 to 20 musicians to play its 75 pieces, which include xylophones, chimes and gongs, said Arlene Chongson, a lecturer on world music.

"It's really easy and fun to learn," she said. "It's very accessible music because you don't have to read notation."

Sumarsam, a Javanese gamelan master from Wesleyan University in Connecticut, will visit campus March 16-19 for a three-day residency. He'll work with the ensemble and give a free, public lecture and demonstration at 8 p.m. Thursday, March 19, at Boll Theatre in Kennedy Union.

The UD Javanese gamelan ensemble will give its inaugural performance at a joint concert with the University's percussion ensemble at 5:30 p.m. Sunday, April 19, at Boll Theatre.

About eight students have already joined the group, and Chongson is encouraging campus and community members to join.

Rehearsals are from 6:15 to 7:45 p.m. Wednesdays in the Music/Theatre Building on campus. For more information, contact Chongson at 229-3915 or via e-mail. (url: <mailto:Arlene.chongson@notes.udayton.edu?subject=Gamelan>)