

JOHN DUARTE (1919-2004)

1. Getaran Jiwa, Variations on a Malaysian Song Op. 125 (1996) 7'31"

AMIRAH ALI (B. 1982)

2. Salji (arr. Nathan Fischer) 4'10"

PAUL CESARCZYK (B. 1977)

3. Jong Jong Inai (Malaysian Traditional Song) 1'03"

TAN HOOI SONG (1947-2008)

4. Exile is Injury (arr. Wann-Dar Tan / rev. Nathan Fischer) 5'44"

AZ SAMAD (B. 1980)

Three Malaysian Popular Songs (arr. Nathan Fischer)

5. Penyair 3'49"

6. Salam Rindu 2'09"

7. Senja Mula Menangis 3'21"

ANDREW ZOHN (B. 1970)

8. On a Malaysian Song 5'05"

SHARIFAH FAIZAH SYED MOHAMMED (B. 1969)

9. Incantation of Ulek Mayang 2'22"

VINCENT LINDSEY-CLARK (B. 1956)

10. Malaysian Sunrise 1'06"

PATRICK TERBRACK (B. 1980)

11. Sia-Sia 1'24"

Vincent Lindsey-Clark (b. 1956)

12. Malaysian Landscape 1'17"

John Duarte (1919-2004)

13. Gubahanku, Variations on an Indonesian Song Op. 124 (1996) 8'36"



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TALES FROM MALAYSIA - BETWEEN TWO WORLDS -

NATHAN FISCHER - GUITAR

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For twenty years, Nathan has built a career that has taken him full swing around the world. Currently, he is a Career Advisor with the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Office of Entrepreneurship and Career Development.

Faculty appointments have included Senior Lecturer of Classical Guitar with the Universiti Teknologi MARA in Malaysia, Visiting Assistant Professor and Post Doctoral Fellow at the American University in Cairo, and Visiting Professor at the National Conservatory in Cairo, Egypt. He also held adjunct positions with the Edith Cowen University in Perth, Australia, the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, and SUNY Fredonia in Upstate New York. He received the UiTM Outstanding Service Award in 2013.

As a performer, Nathan has appeared on five continents as both soloist and chamber musician with the Silver Sands Guitar Trio, the Orphika Duo, and other collaborations. An advocate for commissioning and performing new music he has worked with many exciting composers worldwide. This album is the result of six years of research and collaboration to produce the first Malaysian themed album featuring works for solo classical guitar.

His research portfolio includes grants from the Howard Hanson Institute for New Music, the Fromm Foundation at Harvard, and a U.S. Fulbright Scholar. He is currently co-researcher for a Bestari Perdana grant titled *The Malaysian Art Song as a Unifying and Empowering Cultural Identity*. AUC/UiTM faculty grants enabled study of the works of Antonio Lauro with Luis Zea in Caracas, Venezuela, and presentations on Tazul Tajuddin in Istanbul, Turkey, and on John Duarte at WAAPA in Perth, Australia. He has published with the Malaysian Music Journal and Soundset Records. He is an associate editor of Soundboard and cofounder of a new music incubator for composers and performers called the Twisted Spruce Music Foundation (www.twistedspruce.org).

Nathan holds a DMA and MM from the Eastman School of Music with Nicholas Goluses. He attended the Academia di Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy studying with Oscar Ghiglia. He earned his BM from George Mason University. Upon graduation from Eastman in 2004, he received the Andrés Segovia Award for Musical Accomplishment and Human Endeavor.

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MALAYSIA is a country of diverse people, religions, and backgrounds all striving to work and live in harmony. Surrounded by the Strait of Malacca, the South China Sea, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore, it is a wonderful cultural melting pot. Resting on the equator, most days are characterized by warm weather, gentle breezes, and are decorated with rain showers of all types. The landscape offers views that range from the sunrise and sunset of island beaches to the extravagance and excitement of modern living in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur. There are many sides to the tropical country and its people.

This album draws its inspiration from the gentle and pacific nature of the Malaysian people and their way of art.

GETARAN JIWA, VARIATIONS ON A MALAYSIAN SONG OP. 125 (1996)

John Duarte composed this work at the request of the Classical Guitar Society (WP/Sel) Malaysia. Duarte was an artist-in-residence for the 1996 guitar camp. Upon arrival, he brought both the *Getaran Jiwa* variations and the *Gubahanku* variations to fill the commission of a single work. *Getaran Jiwa* (vibrations of the soul) was a popular song from the year 1960 sung by P. Ramlee in the film *Antara dua Darjat* (between two castes). It is the story of two lovers forcefully separated. After years in exile, the protagonist Ghazali sings this song to remind his love Tengka Zeleha who he is and how he feels about her. This ultimately reunites them despite the challenges they face having been born into different castes. Variations on *Getaran Jiwa* is an important work for Malaysia because it is the first concert work written by a non-Malaysian composer on a Malaysian theme for the classical guitar.

SALJI

Amirah Ali currently lives in Los Angeles where she is a composer and singer. Having grown up in equatorial Malaysia, just outside of Kuala Lumpur, she was accustomed to regular sunshine and daily temperature ranges of 84-91 °F. During graduate studies at Northern Illinois University, she saw snow for the first time and composed a short work originally for piano called *Snow*. *Salji* (Snow) is an arrangement of *Snow* for the guitar. Both graceful and light, it is a natural fit for the instrument.

JONG JONG INAI

Jong Jong Inai (Let's go, Let's go, Henna) is a traditional song in Malaysia. The poem of the song is filled

with life lessons for its listeners, and appears in genres ranging from rock, to folk, to children's songs. Paul Cesarzyk teaches at Mohidial University in Bangkok, Thailand. During a visit to Malaysia, Paul delivered this arrangement to help develop a Malaysian repertoire for guitar. The form and difficulty of the piece are similar to those of a Tárrega Prelude, and in its full form takes cues from Villa-Lobos.

EXILE IS INJURY

This work by Tan Hooi Song was arranged by the Malaysian guitarist Wann-Dar Tan and discovered in a performance at the Tárrega Guitar House in the Klang Valley. Originally composed for choir, it is hauntingly beautiful. Tan Hooi Song was the teacher of many of the Malaysians who come from Johor Bahru, a city at the southern point of Malaysia that borders Singapore. There remains much to be discovered about this work and its composer.

THREE MALAYSIAN POPULAR SONGS

Anyone familiar with the popular and jazz scenes in Kuala Lumpur will know the name Az Samad. Trained at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, he's an active contributor to the hustle and bustle of the live music scene in Kuala Lumpur. *Penyair* (Poet) is a work inspired by his father, A. Samad Said, who is a well-known Malaysian poet; *Salam Rindu* (Welcome Love) is a short work dedicated to Yin Yin Boey (Waterfall Yin); and *Senja Mula Menangis* (The Sunset Begins to Weep) is a programmatic work. Taken together, these works capture the modern side of the city and its music as practiced by locals in daily life.

ON A MALAYSIAN SONG

Andrew Zohn visited Kuala Lumpur in 2015 to undertake a short artist-residency at UiTM and wrote this work for that occasion. The thematic and structural material draws inspiration from the song *Kenek-Kenek Udang* (hit the shrimp), from the film *Gergasi* (1958). Like *Getaran Jiwa*, this song was composed by P. Ramlee, but written in the *Negri Sembilan* dialect. The festive song tells about the Malay wedding culture, which includes banquet food of shrimp and beef. In his composition, Zohn contrasts the celebratory elements of the song with serious departures that add a fresh perspective on color, texture, rhythm, and ornaments.

INCANTATION OF ULEK MAYANG

Sharifah Faizah is the first Malaysian woman to compose a concert work for the classical guitar. She is currently a Senior lecturer in Piano Performance with UiTM, and an active composer. *The incantation of Ulek*

Mayang is a ritual song and dance hailing from the coastal regions of Malaysia, perhaps originating from Terengganu. It tells the tale of a princess spirit who put a spell on a fisherman, leaving him in a trance. When his fellow villagers try to revive him the princess wages war on man. Calling upon her sisters to join her, she is eventually persuaded to defuse the war. Through a ceremonial surrender the fishermen agree to celebrate the sister spirits by dancing and performing the *Ulek Mayang* along the coastal waters. Part of their ritual includes offering colorful rice and other sacrifices. Be wary, it is still believed that when the *Ulek Mayang* is performed at least one audience member (or the performer!) could become possessed by the curse.

MALAYSIAN SUNRISE AND MALAYSIAN LANDSCAPE

Vincent Lindsey-Clark is one of the most prolific British guitar composers and performers. He composed these pieces to contribute to a growing base of works with a Malaysian National theme, and toward the development of a graded repertoire for classical guitar. The two works are beautifully crafted both in musical and technical terms. *Malaysian Sunrise* is a programmatic work that looks to the colorful island sunrises while *Malaysian Landscape* draws on gamelan as a musical source for its inspiration.

SIA-SIA

Patrick Terbrack is a jazz saxophonist and former lecturer with UiTM. A regular in the KL live music scene, where he frequently performed his original compositions, he was in high demand as a jazz teacher in Malaysia. *Sia-Sia* (Wasted Love) is an emotional attempt to capture the personal feelings inherent in a never-ending cycle of love and loss. It recounts the endless days and months of unrequited love. This version, arranged for Nathan Fischer, was modified slightly from the original 2008 composition. The original harmonic structure was built off the swaying motion of *Maj7b5* chord. This version is re-harmonized so the modulation captures that moment when loss is forgotten and recovery begins.

GUBAHANKU: VARIATIONS ON AN INDONESIAN SONG OP. 124

John Duarte wrote *Gubahanku* at the same time he wrote *Getaran Jiwa*. *Gubahanku* (my poem) is an Indonesian popular song written by Gatot Soenjoto and sung by Deddy Demhudi. Coming into popularity in 1976 the song was inspired by love and not nationalism as was typical at the end of the *serioso* movement in Indonesia. Duarte's two compositions *Getaran Jiwa* and *Gubahanku* are mirrored in their form and compositional elements—both having a theme, four variations, and finale. *Gubahanku* offers a stunning finale that evokes colors of the virtuosic gamelan famous throughout the Malay Archipelago.

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