

# Music from the former Dutch East Indies

## Out of the shadows

### Concert by pianists Henk Mak van Dijk and Gustavo Corrales Romero

Central Library The Hague, Sunday 17 November 2018, start 14:00

#### Balinese Ceremonial Music [1937]

Colin McPhee

*Pemoengkah*

*Gambangan*

*Taboeh teloe*

#### Wireng [1912]

Paul Seelig

From 'Three Javanese Dances', for piano solo

#### Guantánamo [2018]

Gustavo Corrales Romero

#### Jazz Concerto for piano solo and small jazz orchestra

Ludwig van Zele

[arrangement for two pianos by the composer, 1932-1937]

*I Maestoso-Moderato-Allegro non troppo*

*II Andantino con moto*

*III Allegro*

#### Elaboration

In this concert music will be played by three composers from the former Dutch East Indies. **Colin McPhee** was a Canadian composer/pianist who sought inspiration on the island of Bali in the early 1930s. He became so enthusiastic about the 'strange' Balinese gamelan that he stayed there for almost ten years to study the music. In the end he wrote the standard work *Music in Bali*. His work is comparable with that of the Dutch musicologist Jaap Kunst, who conducts similar research on gamelan on Java.

His *Balinese Ceremonial Music* was written for a conference in Bali in 1937 and was premiered by McPhee himself and Bali specialist Walter Spies. In America it was performed by, among others, McPhee and Benjamin Britten, and by Bela Bartok and his wife. These are three unique and beautiful gamelan transcriptions for two pianos. The first piece is called *Pemoengkah* and is music used as an overture when arranging the dolls of shadow play. The next piece, *Gambangan*, refers to the *gambang*, an instrument with fourteen wooden keys. The *gamelan gambang* is only played at cremations. Finally, *Taboeh teloe*, is music played by a large orchestra as an opening for large ceremonies such as a cremation or temple festival.

From the collection of the NMI (Dutch Music Institute) comes the Javanese dance *Wireng* by Indische composer **Paul Seelig**. After studying cello at the famous Leipzig Conservatory, Seelig returned to Java in 1899 to work as kapellmeister of the western royal orchestra of the emperor of Solo. At this court he became acquainted with traditional Javanese dances and gamelan music. Seelig also made transcriptions for piano. In *Wireng* you can hear the two pentatonic tunings of the gamelan: *slendro* in the corner parts, *pelog* in the middle section.

Pianist/composer **Ludwig [Lud] van Zele**, originating from Java, was inspired by the jazz in the colony that had come from America and Europe in the early 1920s. As a classical pianist educated at the Conservatory of Nice, there were little opportunities for him when he returned to the town of Malang on East Java. This is why he chose the then respectable profession of cinema musician and began providing music for the latest Hollywood films from America. It became his inspiration for the completely unique jazz concert that he started in 1932 and finished in 1937 to perform in Malang. In the Netherlands the piece saw its first performance only at the Tong Tong Festival 2017, played by Henk Mak van Dijk and the big band of Timothy Galloway. In the *Haagse Courant* the piece was referred to as 'the Indische Rhapsody in Blue'.

Cuban born **Gustavo Corrales Romero** is as interested in folk music as his predecessors. He wrote the charming original work *Guantánamo* for two pianos, inspired by popular folkloristic genres and melodies from his hometown and province, from which he also derived the name. The piece was finalized in March, had its premiere in May and is now only being performed for the second time. A touch of Latin America!

**Pianist Henk Mak van Dijk** has specialized in classical music from the former Dutch East Indies. His research - in collaboration with the NMI [Dutch Music Institute] – has resulted in several concerts, lectures, recordings, books and exhibitions. Among others, he wrote the book *De oostenwind waait naar het westen* [The Eastern Wind blows to the West], a study on Indische composers and compositions (KITLV Press, Leiden).

The latest subject he is pursuing, relating to music life in the former colony, is Indische jazz, a history that has been buried to this day. He is currently working on a book about this: *Tropenjazz; jazz in Indië 1919-1949*, which will be presented in The Hague in May next year. Henk also has plans for Java: a concert and an exhibition of Indische classical music at the Yogyakarta music institute and a permanent exhibition about music life in the Dutch East Indies in its own traditional Javanese *limasan* home.

In the theatre he will be a returning guest at the show *De Indië Monologen*, as of November.

<https://makvandijk.wordpress.com/>

**Pianist/composer Gustavo Corrales Romero** was educated in Cuba and Russia. His career and experience now span over 30 years. His repertoire includes works by classical composers and creations by his contemporaries, allowing him to become one of the leading interpreters of this music. Through his various concert formulas his main aim is to promote 'the other sound of Latin America' through the Latin American classical and contemporary repertoire in which he specializes. His company KyG Productions has been producing CDs, books and concerts since 2000.

His debut as a writer, *Los Herederos*, written in Spanish, was accepted for publication with great enthusiasm by Ediciones EntreRíos and presented at the Miami Book Fair International. In the meantime Corrales has finished his 2nd book, which is being readied for publication. After solo CD productions *Palimpsesto* (An evolution of the Cuban piano) and *Fresco* (A wide impression of Latin American classical and contemporary music) preparations are underway to produce *Arioso*, featuring Corrales' suite of arrangements for piano trio of traditional Cuban songs.

[www.gustavocorralesromero.com](http://www.gustavocorralesromero.com)