

A MILLION DEAD END STREETS

A REFLECTIVE JOURNAL ABOUT BAD HABITS, CREATIVITY AND THE PROCESS OF BRINGING ABOUT CHANGE. FEATURING SELECTED MUNDANE MOMENTS FROM MY LIFE, SOMETIMES WITH PHOTOS. DAILY POSTS OF VARIABLE QUALITY THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE OF 2007, AFTER WHICH...

Showing posts for query **gamelan**. Show all posts

THURSDAY, 11 JANUARY 2007

Berkshire Maestros' Gamelan

I took a group of six students to Stoneham Court in Reading this afternoon for an hour-long workshop about the gamelan, the main element of traditional Indonesian music (see this post). The session was led by Nikhil Dally - a quietly charismatic man who elicited a great response from my students with his gentle yet engaging teaching style. We were given the opportunity to play the various metal percussion instruments that comprise the Javanese gamelan, performing a loosely structured piece as an ensemble following Nikhil's guidance. I've heard and admired recordings of gamelan but nothing can compare to being in the same room with the instruments. The Gong Ageng is the largest instrument in the Javanese gamelan with a diameter of approximately 85cm. Its tone is so deep and resonant that it can be felt within the body; perhaps the most beautiful long-decaying sound that I've ever heard. The other instruments, such as the Bonang and Saron (gong-chimes and metallophones respectively), have a bell-like timbre that is soft but harmonically pure. The metal bars and resonating chambers are suspended from intricately hand-carved wooden frames that are objects of beauty in themselves. Nikhil ended our session by playing an immensely dextrous solo piece (although he claims to be "a beginner"), using his thumbs and the base of his palms to mute the notes. He also sang in Javanese. Enchanting and entrancing.

This map would seem to indicate that there are fewer than 100 gamelan in the U.K. As such, it was a great privilege to have played these authentic and unique instruments. Thank you, Nikhil.

And still I complain about my job.

POSTED BY MATT THURGOOD AT 21:22 0 COMMENTS

LABELS: BERKSHIRE MAESTROS, GAMELAN, INDONESIA, JAVANESE, NIKHIL DALLY

THURSDAY, 4 JANUARY 2007

BLOG ARCHIVE

▼ 2007 (71)

▼ March (11)

Cycling & Thea

Gilmore

Happy Birthday,

Emma!

Another Friday

Miscellany

My Mood Improves &

Doudou Returns

Something/Nothing

Not Much Of A Post

(Son Of A Load Of
Bollocks)

I Can Get No

Satisfaction (A

Load Of Bollocks)

A Madcap Sunday

Summer Holiday

2007

The Meditations Of

Marcus Aurelius

Eyelids Drooping

► February (28)

► January (32)

► 2006 (2)

ABOUT ME

MATT THURGOOD

I live and work in

Bracknell, Berkshire (UK)

with my partner Nic and

her two children. I am 34

years of age.

Hertfordshire County Music Service

Head of Music Service: John Witchell

The Education Centre,
Butterfield Road,
Wheathampstead,
Herts. AL4 8PY

Winners of the National Music Council of Great Britain Major Trophy

Mr. Nikhil Dally,
29, Kings Paddock,
Hampton,
Middlesex.
TW12 2EF

Our Ref: [REDACTED]

Contact: [REDACTED]

Date: 9 July, 1996

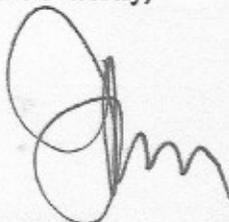
Dear Nikhil,

Just a note to thank you sincerely for your contribution to our recent secondary teachers INSET course. Your session on Friday afternoon was fantastic. We were all feeling a little exhausted before we started but you immediately motivated us and made us work harder than ever - with the result that we enjoyed it more than ever.

Sylvia and I are delighted that you are giving so much to the Gamelan in Stevenage. We are grateful to you, not just for your expertise, but also in the way you are so committed to the pupils you encounter.

We look forward to a long and rewarding association.

Yours sincerely,



John Witchell
Head of Music Service

Twickenham
Middlesex
TW2

02.04.96

Dear Nikhil,

I am sorry it has taken me so long to write - it's a busy time of year - but now I have got around to it I would just like to repeat the thanks I expressed to you in our phone call of some weeks ago.

The workshop you conducted for myself, Lilja Zobens and the eleven G.S.M.&D. students on 12th February last was an undoubted success. Pooling the opinions of the students, I would say the following; we all felt that you pitched the workshop at just the right level, that is, instructive, without the least condescension to our ignorance of Gamelan, giving us enough background information to prepare the way as we proceeded, and with a clear sense of purpose that nevertheless allowed the creative digressions of yourself and various members of our group.

What seemed like a daunting task at the beginning of the session -- namely, the learning and performance of a piece of Gamelan music - was in fact very attainable. That sense of achievement at the end of two hours made the experience complete for us. And with the half hour discussion at the end to give us a realistic picture of Javanese cultural life, the workshop was everything we might have hoped it would be; it gave us plenty to reflect upon both privately and in group discussions over the following couple of weeks.

Speaking personally, what I took away from the morning's work was a very specific sense of well-being. This must be in some part due to the music's peculiar kind of order. There is a sense of rightness and security about it, if that's the correct word, that you don't often encounter in western classical music, and stemming from a set of values that seem to be the antithesis of European ones, and which make me ponder.

I would certainly recommend the South Bank Gamelan programme, with yourself as tutor, to anyone wanting to investigate this area. I fully intend to come again with further student groups, or even social parties keen to try out something new. It would be great fun for non-musicians, that's obvious.

Once again, thanks very much for a fascinating morning's work.

Yours Sincerely,

Julia Beards

████████████████████
Worcester WR1 ██████

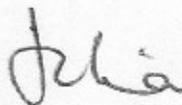
15 July 1991

Dear Nikhil

Many thanks on behalf of all the members of my little group who met you yesterday morning and who so thoroughly enjoyed the Gamelan workshop you led for us. Your method of being encouraging and yet firm and making it a very real learning process was the recipe for such a successful workshop for us all. I am now chasing up all the addresses you gave me to find other Gamelan perhaps nearer to our address.

It was a pleasure to have had the experience and we all felt the richer for it.

With all good wishes
Yours sincerely



Julia M Saunders

01483 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
WORKING GUZU [REDACTED]

Sunday 11 June 00

Dear Nikhil,

Thank you for a very worthwhile and energising workshop. It was a marvellous opportunity to discover Gamelan music, to use elements in music and to rehearse as an orchestra. The children have been enthusing about being able to play as a group on authentic Indonesian instruments. It is an experience they will remember with pleasure and a marvellous introduction to Indonesian music.

Thank you for your sensitive teaching given with both authority and fun. You judged the children accurately and they loved working with you. I hope we will be able to come again. I shall let [REDACTED] know how much we gained from our Gamelan Workshop.

Yours sincerely.

Rosie Lipscomb.



THE HIGHLANDS SCHOOL

Wardle Avenue, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 6JR

Tel: 0118 942 7186 Fax: 0118 945 4953

21st January 2004

Dear Nikhil Dally,

I would like to thank you for giving the children such an enjoyable, stimulating and engaging couple of hours last Friday.

You managed to contain the garrulous [redacted] and bring out the very best in [redacted], who struggles with concentration. Everyone gave it the thumbs-up and marks ranged from 10 out of 10 to 11 out of 10.

As promised, I have enclosed a couple of pictures, which I think capture the mood rather well, and a thank-you note from the children.

Until next time,

Jane Patey

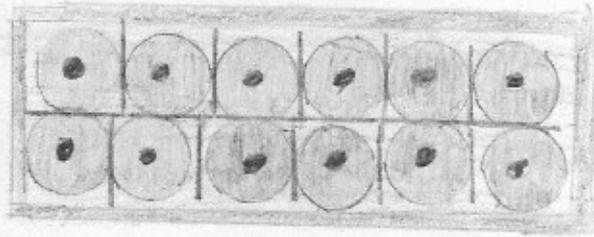
Meadow Vale School,
Moordale Avenue,
Priestwood,
Bracknell,
Berkshire,
RG42 1SY.

20th June 2000.

Tel no. [REDACTED]



Nikhil Dally,
Arbour Vale School,
Stoke Road,
Slough,
SL1 6LR.



To Nikhil,

Thank you for inviting us to Gamelan at your school for a basic lesson. Everyone who took part enjoyed it. My favourite instruments were the drums and the pull. It was much better than having a Friday morning in school.

I hope to have another lesson.

Yours Sincerely

Miss. [REDACTED]



I really enjoyed it. It's Look good and
hear the music. All the gamelan is too
good. All really good and you too. I did play
lots of music. All is great. Thank you
for let us to see you. All is look
so good! wow!

Robert



To Nikhil
From Sophie

GONGS ARE VERY LOUD

AND NONGS ARE VERY SOFT

MELODIES WERE PLAYED BY 2,1,6,5

EVERY SECOND WAS SUCH FUN

LOUD BUT VERY INTERESTING

AND DON'T FORGET THE TALK

NOW MY POEM MUST COME TO AN

END AND I MUST SAY THANK YOU