Baliphonics: Adaptation of Sri Lankan, Low Country, *Bali* Ritual Music on to the Concert Stage

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Abstract

Reviving local interest in a diminishing form of traditional music can be achieved through musical collaboration. Commercially-oriented collaborations do impose the risk of demeaning the traditional music involved. However, with careful consideration, it is possible to effectively adapt traditional music on to the concert stage within a collaborative ensemble framework. Such attempts can also provide opportunities to expose and create interest in traditional music on a more global level. The Baliphonics is one such ensemble that adapts Sri Lankan, Low-Country, bali ritual music of the Raigama region on to a musical context that includes elements of Contemporary Improvisation, Modern Jazz and Sound Art. This paper discusses issues and challenges faced during the Baliphonics collaborative process, focusing on musical analyses of the bali ritual music in its original context as well as the Baliphonics ensemble.

The Low-Country tradition of music geographically represents the Western and Southern provinces of Sri Lanka. It is one of three distinctive musical traditions that are identified with the Sinhala Buddhist community of the island. Of the other two, Up-Country represents the central hill areas and Sabaragamuwa is named after a province that is in the central region between the Low-Country and Up-Country. The music of all three traditions was essentially developed and nurtured within the framework of the Sri Lankan ritual. Rituals are identified under three categories:

1. *Bali*- Smaller rituals, usually intended for an individual, where the deities associated with *graha* (planets) are invoked and pacified, in order to ward off their evil influences,
2. *Tovil*- Rituals carried out to ward off evil influences inflicted by demons and
3. *Maḍu*- Larger rituals, carried out with the intention of bringing prosperity for the entire village and community.

The ritual and music in focus here is the *bali* ritual, particularly, its version from a

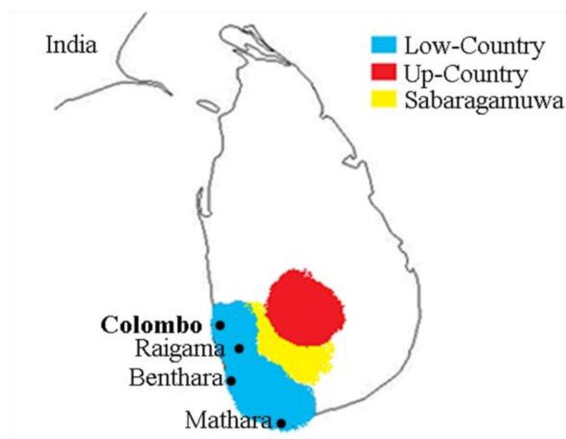

Figure 1: Map of Sri Lanka and the Regions of Traditional Music

region within the Low-Country, known as Raigama (**Fig. 1**).

The current trends of the Low-Country *bali* ritual suggest that its practice is diminishing. This is particularly true within the Raigama tradition, where the number of *bali* rituals performed by its expert practitioners has steadily decreased, even within the past five years. It is also becoming more common to exclude important musical aspects of the performance such as the drumming within the performance of private rituals.[1] With such a trend, it seems unlikely that the ritual will continue to provide a healthy nurturing performance context for the Low-Country music in the future.

Having studied the *bali* ritual in-depth and being an experienced musician in contemporary Jazz musical forms, the author of this paper finds himself to be in a unique position to proactively engage in a means to keep the *bali* ritual music alive. Most importantly, he believes that music of this ritual deserves to be kept alive outside of the ritual context. The author believes that music can be effectively adapted on to the concert stage within the framework of a collaborative ensemble, which in turn can expose and create interest for the original ritual music locally and internationally.

This paper examines such an initiation by the author, a collaborative ensemble known as the Baliphonics. The Baliphonics adapts the music of the *bali* ritual in the Raigama region of the Low-Country tradition into a musical context that includes elements of Contemporary Improvisation, Modern Jazz and Sound Art. The collaborative process of such an ensemble needs careful consideration, if the essence of the traditional music involved is to be effectively transformed into the new setting. The paper highlights the issues and challenges faced during the collaborative process, both musical and non-musical.

The content of this paper is drawn primarily from the author's own research

over the past eight years. In particular, the content of musical aspects of the *bali* ritual in its original setting is derived from the author's doctoral dissertation (Suraweera 2009). This includes field-work carried out between 2006-2009 with extensive research interviews and discussions with the late Sandhoris Jayantha.[2] From 2007 to date, further research was carried out, attending rituals performed by a family of ritual experts in the Raigama region (introduced in Section 2). The content on the Baliphonics ensemble is drawn from an ongoing project, currently involving two ritual experts, two Western musicians and the author. In terms of transliteration, Sinhala terms in this article use diacritical marks according the system presented in *A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language* (Geiger 1935: i). The musical analysis is supplemented with transcriptions that use a Western-based notation system devised by the author.

The topic of transforming the *Bali* ritual music of Sri Lanka for the concert stage is organised under the following sections: 1) *Bali* Ritual Background 2) Ritual Experts in this Study 3) Musical Aspects of the *Bali* 4) Baliphonics Ensemble and its Musical Aspects 6) Non-Musical Issues and Challenges of Baliphonics.

1. *Bali* Ritual: Background

The term *bali* refers to an offering of a gift or oblation (Kariyawasam 1986: 13). The *bali* ritual stems from a belief in the benevolent and malevolent influences of the nine *graha deviyo* (planetary deities) on humans. It is often intended for a particular individual. During this ritual, the planetary deities are invoked and pacified in order to ward off their evil influences. The deities are *Ravi* (sun), *Candra* (moon), *Kuja* (Mars), *Budha* (Mercury), *Guru* (Jupiter), *Sukra* (Venus), *Sani* (Saturn) and *Kētu*, the ascending and descending modes of the moon. Each planetary deity, among other things, has its own particular form, colour, vehicles, weapons and preferred foods (De Silva 2000: 23-24). Though the *bali* ritual contains some demonic references, it is not regarded as a demonic ritual per se.

It is believed that from birth to death, an individual passes through periods over which certain planets have authority. The duration of these periods can be known in advance by referring to a horoscope that charts relevant planetary movements. A horoscope is cast at one's birth, and is often consulted at times of crisis or illness. If it is ascertained that an individual is under a planetary

combination with a harmful influence, a *bali* ritual may be recommended to weaken these influences (De Silva 2000: 15-22).

Scholars agree that the present version of the *bali* practiced in Sri Lanka originated in the Kotte period[3]. Prior to this period, there had been an established practice of Indian Brahmins visiting Sri Lanka to conduct *bali* rituals for royals and other privileged people in exchange for considerable amounts of money. One story[4] revolves around one such Brahmin in the ritual trade, known as Pandit Ramachandra, and Sri Rahula of Totagamuva, a popular nationalistic monk at the time, who was determined to reduce the power of the Brahmins. The monk invites the Brahmin to perform a *bali* ritual at his temple. Without the Brahmin's knowledge, the monk instructs his skilled disciple, Vidagama Maitree Thero, to transcribe the whole ritual as it is carried out. At the end of the ritual, the monk Rahula claims that he recalled a similar ritual to the one just performed stored in the collection of palm leaf texts at his temple. When the Brahmin is shown the text, he realises that he has been tricked. He feels embarrassed and leaves, vowing never to return again. De Silva states that "Rahula deliberately stole the knowledge of the *bali* ritual from the Brahmin and gave (it) a Buddhist appearance by placing it under the Buddha" (De Silva 2000: 38).

The physical set up of the rituals witnessed during this study consists of one main altar dedicated to the planetary deities. This is made from plantain stems and coconut leaves, often using a chair as a base. The backdrop of this main altar displays pictures of the planetary deities. A decorated tray placed inside this altar is used to place the offerings of food to the deities during the ritual. A number of ceremonial objects are placed on a tray in front of the altar. The patient sits on a mat directly opposite the main altar. At the start of the ritual, a white curtain is held in front of the patient, which is later removed during the ritual.

2. Rituals of the Contemporary Experts

The rituals witnessed by the author during the research period were conducted by a highly respected family of three ritual artists from the *Raigama* region: Daniel Rupathilaka and his two sons Prasantha and Susantha.

Daniel, currently 70 years of age, is one of the most respected dancers of the tradition and he actively engaged in ritual performances till recently. Being born into a family lineage of traditional Low-Country arts practitioners, Daniel learnt Low-Country drumming, dance, painting, sculpture and astrology from his father

Simon Fernando, who was a respected artist during his time. For Daniel, Low-Country performance has become an intuitive art form as a result of years of experience performing in a countless number of rituals. In recognition of this service to the Low-Country arts, Daniel was awarded a Presidential Award in 1996.

Prasantha (born in 1972), the youngest son of Daniel, is a rare exponent of traditional drumming, as he is equally experienced and established in both the contemporary music scene as well as the rituals. His ritual experience began from the age of fifteen, when he started accompanying his father. His experience as a contemporary musician began in 1989 when he worked as an artist for the International Peace Council of Sri Lanka for seven years.[5] Prasantha has a collaborative nature and this is evident from his career; he has designed and built a drum which has Sri Lankan and Japanese influences, performed at the WOMAD (World of Music Arts and Dance) Festival in Singapore and Sri Lanka, and conducted a drum orchestra of 350 drummers, which was commissioned by the International Cricket Council. Currently Prasantha is a member of the Sri Lankan State Dance Ensemble and has become a respected teacher with a wide community of students.

Susantha (born in 1970), the elder son of Daniel, is also a well established traditional artist in Sri Lanka. Susantha, too, was exposed to ritual performances at a young age, where most of his learning occurred through his father and grandfather. Like Prasantha, Susantha has also been a member of the State Dance Ensemble. Susantha is currently the only permanent musician in the area of traditional music at the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Cooperation. His collaborative nature is also apparent throughout his career, where he has performed with a number of leading dance ensembles and artists in Sri Lanka: Chithrasena Dance Ensemble, Budhawatta Dance Ensemble, Ravibandu Vidyapathi and Panibaratha.[6]

3. Musical Aspects of the *Bali*

Most ritual experts believe that there are 35 types of *bali* (De Silva 2000: 30). However, the most commonly practiced *bali* performed by the ritual artists above is known as the *graha tovile*.[7] The following detailed chronology shows the overall structure of the *graha tovile* and how the music is accommodated.

1. Invite the patient to sit and light oil lamps.
2. *Magul bera* (ceremonial drumming, discussed in Section 3.2) and the observance of the five precepts.
3. Recitation of verses in salutation to the Three Refuges, various deities including the deity of the land.
4. Verses of *bali* ritual inception. These are introduced with *āṣirvāda kavi* (verses of blessing). The inception story mentioned is the one that revolves around Vijaya, believed to be the first King of Sri Lanka, and Kuveni, a demon Queen (Kariyawasam 1986: 19-28).
5. Verses of inceptions of the ceremonial objects are placed on the patient's feet. The objects include a coconut, some rice, *mōl gaha* (pole used to crush grains), and two medicinal plants known as *tolabō* (*crinum asiaticum*) (n.a. 2006) and *sīrässa* (*cissus quadrangularis*) (Bambaradeniya et al 2006: 26).
6. *Pirit huya* (chanting of the thread with *pirit,* a Buddhist chanting ceremony).
7. The curtain blocking the view of the altars is unveiled and offerings are made to the deities.
8. *Graha kavi* (verses for the planetary deities). These verses mention the weapons and qualities of the deities. The segment includes invitations and healing songs.
9. Blessings with oil lamp threads using verses known as *set kiyaman* or *sirasapāda*.
10. Requesting the deities to leave with the offerings and warding off the malevolent spirits.
11. Giving thanks. The ritual concludes with *pūjā bera* (a solo drumming pattern dedicated to give thanks).

The two main musical components of the ritual are drumming and singing. Dance is also a performance aspect that is inseparable from the music. The following musical analysis will mostly be limited to the drumming, with some references to the singing, as serious analysis of the latter is considered beyond the scope of this

paper. The musical transcriptions intend to give some insight into how the patterns are originally played on the Low-Country drum. For example, the notes on either side of the line represent different sides of the drum. *Akṣara* (drum syllables) that make up the drum patterns are written above the notation.

3.1 Segment 1

All segments of the ritual consist of singing and chanting delivered in a number of different styles, depending on the content and type of text. Microtonal intervals are a primary feature of the singing. During the ritual performance, artists generally sing in a 'call and response' style, alternating the lines of a verse between each other. Performers also have the freedom to shift the pitch or tonal centre of a given verse depending on the atmosphere and energy of a given moment. An overview of the singing is shown in (**Table 1**) with the different singing styles identified.

Vocal delivery style	**Text**	**Range**	**Drums**	**Dance**
Pitched Recitation A (PR-A)	text set to the musical metre of a repetitive pattern	3-4 semitones	Yes	most occasions
Pitched Recitation B (PR-B)	lines of verses are short, these are lengthened to fit the musical metre of a repetitive pattern, recognized as *keṭi kavi*	3-4 semitones	Yes	Yes
Pitched Recitation C (PR-C)	no text, melody is sung using sounds of *tā* and *nā,* set to musical metre of repetitive pattern, identified as *tānam* singing	3-4 semitones	Yes	Yes
Pitched Recitation D (PR-D)	no text, melody is sung using sounds of *tā* and *nā,* set to longer patterns with an irregular beat	3-4 semitones	Yes	Yes
Pitched Recitation E (PR-E)	not set to a metrical metre, texts generally are in honour of the Three Refuges	3-4 semitones	None	None

Pitched Recitation F (PR-F)	text set to musical metre of repetitive pattern, only occurs in *bali* ritual	10 semitones	Yes	Yes
Un-pitched Recitation A (UPR-A)	Un-metrical. Text recited with attack, only in offerings in *tovil* and *bali* rituals	None	Yes	None

Table 1: Vocal Delivery Styles in Low-Country Rituals

3.2 Segment 2

Magul bera, a solo drumming piece, is considered to be essential knowledge for every professional drummer. In Sinhala culture, the *magul bera* pattern is performed at most events that are considered to be auspicious. Older artists believe that the particular combinations of *akṣara* groups in the *magul bera* contain the power to create such an environment. The *magul bera* demonstrates the expressive qualities of free and stretched timing in Low-Country drumming to the highest standard. It is one of two Low-Country drumming patterns which do not accompany the voice or dance[8]. Drummers regard the pattern to be one of the most important in the drumming repertoire. The piece consists of three *vaṭṭams* (movements) which are dedicated to the Three Refuges. Each *vaṭṭama* includes drumming phrases that are strung together with *akṣara* sequences free of a regular beat or measure. The first *vaṭṭama* of the *magul bera* is shown below (**Fig. 2**).

3.3 Segment 3

Unaccompanied verses are sung in the style of PR-E.

3.4 Segments 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9

Verses in these segments are accompanied using a collection of drumming patterns. The pattern below (**Fig. 3**) is used only to accompany verses known as *keṭi kavi* (sung in the style of PR-B) at the beginning of a segment.

On the contrary, the following patterns are played more frequently and accompany most of the verses sung in meter. For the purpose of analysis, the patterns are labelled pattern A (**Fig. 4**), pattern B (**Fig. 5**), Pattern C (**Fig. 6**), Pattern D (**Fig. 7**) and pattern E (**Fig. 8**).

In addition to the above, there are a number of patterns that are played exclusively in segments 8 and 9. One particular pattern is one that is in 7 beats (**Fig. 9**).

Patterns A to E feature heavy embellishment and improvisation depending on the skill of the performer. There are also a number of transitional patterns and endings (codas) known as *iratti* that provide a sense of arrangement to the performance. Each pattern has several *iraṭṭi* associated with it and their performance depends on the skill of the dancer and availability of time. Typically, when a similar pattern is performed on more than one occasion, a different *iraṭṭi* would be performed during its second performance.

Two examples of codas for pattern A and pattern C are shown in **Figs. 10 and 11** below.

Ritual artists have the ability and freedom to sing a particular set of verses phrased in a number of different ways. This allows any given verse to be performed with one of many patterns listed above. For example, the verses that mention the inception story of the *bali* can either be sung to the accompaniment of pattern A, pattern B or pattern C. Within the ritual context, the choice of pattern used within these segments is generally dictated by the enthusiasm of the audience, availability of time and energy of the performers. The experienced artist, who knows each corresponding transitional pattern and coda by heart, follows the singer freely without difficulty. This important feature of the music introduces a strong element of spontaneity and improvisation to the performance.

3.5 Segment 7

Musically these segments contain no new material.

3.6 Segment 10

A very intense, high-energy version of pattern B is performed during this segment, as the drumming accompanies the act of warding off malevolent sprits of the ritual space.

3.7 Segment 11

The final segment of the ritual features the thanks giving pattern known as the *pūjā bera,* which is shorter but of a similar nature to the *magul bera* in segment 2.

The content of the paper up to this point presented the music of the *bali* ritual in its original context. The intention of this background material is to provide the reader with some appreciation of the depth of musical understanding required of this traditional music, if it is to be effectively adapted into a new musical setting within a collaborative ensemble.

Figure 2: First Vaṭṭama (Movement) of the Magul Bera

Figure 3: Pattern Used for Keṭi Kavi

Figure 4: Pattern A

Figure 5: Pattern B

Figure 6: Pattern C

Figure 7: Pattern D

Figure 8: Pattern E

Figure 9: Pattern F

Figure 10: Coda (Pattern A)

Figure 11: Coda (Pattern B)

4. Baliphonics Ensemble and its musical aspects

Baliphonics, being an experimental ensemble, adapts the music of the *bali* ritual into a musical context that includes elements of Contemporary Improvisation, Modern Jazz and Sound Art. Since the groups' establishment by the author in 2008, the Baliphonics has evolved in terms of personnel, ensemble size and instrumentation. The author considers these experimentations to be essential as a collaboration of this nature requires constant re-evaluation and refinement.

Initially, the ensemble consisted of the three ritual artists in this study, three musicians from New Zealand (Reuben Derrick, Misha Marks and Isaac Smith) and the author. The instrumentation at this initial stage included the saxophone, guitar, double bass, drum set, Low-Country drum and voices. The role of the New Zealand musicians was to find a collective approach in order to musically respond to the ritual music within the contemporary Sound Art framework. The drum set which was starting to adapt the Low-Country drumming characteristics, acted as the bridge between the two groups of musicians. Due to impracticalities of managing such a large group and the challenge of committing all the members to gain an in-depth knowledge of the ritual music, the number of members in Baliphonics was reduced to three in 2011.

The second rendition of the ensemble consisted of the author on the drum set, Isaac Smith on double bass and Eshantha Peiris on viola. The approach at this stage was to perform the ritual music instrumentally, without the element of voice. Although the reduced number of members made it much easier for the group to immerse itself in the ritual music, communicating the original style of the singing on the viola proved extremely difficult. The omission of the Low-Country drum during this stage allowed the author to further develop his own style of adapting the ritual drumming on to the drum set.

The instrumentation of the current rendition of Baliphonics consists of piano, double bass, drums and two voices. The members in the ensemble include two of the ritual artists Prasantha and Susantha Rupathilaka, Eshantha Peris, Isaac Smith and the author.

4.1 Members of the Current Ensemble

The calibre and experience of the ritual artists in the current ensemble was already established during the initial sections of this paper. Backgrounds of the other musicians, including the author, are as follows.

Eshantha Peiris, a Sri Lankan based musician, completed his diploma in Piano Performance from the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. From 2003-2008, Eshantha attended New York University’s Steinhardt School, where he earned Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Music Performance and Composition. While at NYU, he also served as assistant conductor of the NYU Orchestra and as an adjunct instructor in the piano department. Eshantha is currently a conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Sri Lanka, director of a

number of active local choirs such as the Old Joes Choir, Contempo Choir and the Senior Choir of Wesley College.

Isaac Smith graduated from the New Zealand School of Music Jazz Programme with a major in Double Bass in 2007. Smith currently resides in Sri Lanka, engaging in musical activities and voluntary music teaching. Prior to his voluntary work in Sri Lanka, Smith was an established and active member of the New Zealand creative and improvised music scene, frequently performing in venues and festivals around the country. In 2004, he was awarded best overall bass player at the Palmerston North Youth Jazz Combo competitions at the Manawatu Jazz Festival. Among his professional experience, Smith has worked extensively both as a musician and director for New Zealand theatre companies Indian ink and Ake Ake Theatre Company.

The author attained his doctorate in ethnomusicology in 2010 from the University of Canterbury in New Zealand. His research focused on Sri Lankan Low-Country traditional drumming. Prior to this, in 2005, he completed a Bachelor of Music in jazz, majoring in drums, with first-class honours. Suraweera has been a performing jazz musician in New Zealand for around ten years and has performed in some of the major Arts and Jazz Festivals in New Zealand. His own ensembles tend to focus on experimentation with Sri Lankan traditional musical material. Aside from the Baliphonics, he has initiated a number of other collaborative groups including the Serendib Sextet and the Music Matters Collective.

4.2 Baliphonics Performance Structure

The duration of a typical Baliphonics performance varies between 40 to 50 minutes. The musical content for this programme is drawn from material presented previously in the Musical Aspects of the *Bali* section. As the focus of Baliphonics is to adapt purely the musical elements of the ritual, the programme can be structured keeping musical interest and variety as a primary objective. The structure of a typical Baliphonics performance is organised as follows:

1. *Magul bera*: The solo drum piece provides a very strong introduction to the performance and exposes the expressive nature of Low-Country drumming immediately.

2. Verses from segments 4 and 5 of the ritual: This segment in the programme allows the ensemble to explore music based in various drumming patterns along with their transitional segments.
3. Verses from segment 8, dedicated to planetary deities: The music from this segment showcases a drum pattern in 7 beats.
4. Verses from segment 10 of the ritual: the intensity of this music allows the performance to reach a climax just before its conclusion.
5. *Pūjā bera:* This short solo drum piece, along with the *magul bera* at the start of the programme, acts as an effective frame for the programme.

In item 2 above, the ensemble retains the element of improvisation in the structure of the verses, similar to a ritual performance, giving each Baliphonics performance an exciting live-edge. This element of spontaneity demands a thorough understanding of the drum vocabulary and singing style from all members involved.

4.3 Instrumentation

The two voices and their singing styles are essentially uncompromised with the current instrumentation and their specific roles. Recitations are presented in the original style, retaining the microtonal elements, while the artists are encouraged not to restrict their voices by agreeing upon a tonal centre for a particular set of verses. Retaining this element required a lot of preparation from the pianist and the bassist as they need to be able to instantly adapt to new pitch centres when following the singing.

Continuing with the approach of the previous Baliphonics rendition, the current ensemble does not include a traditional Low-Country drum. Instead, the author adapts the ritual drum language to the Western drum set. This is an in-depth study of its own right which has taken a number of years to develop, where inspiration and guidance was sought from international musicians of high calibre who have taken similar approaches with different traditional musics.[9] While this shows that the Low-Country drum language is worthy enough to be learnt on another instrument, it also provides the local listener with some intense familiarity within a new experimental ensemble.

The role of the piano in the current ensemble is to communicate with the singers, using scales and harmonic clusters that extend to the melodic content of

the singing. The pianist also draws upon the rhythmic structures of the drum patterns. An approach that is intentionally avoided is to provide a harmonic backing to the singing in accordance with the Western ear[10], as this would compromise the raw quality of the singing style. The pianist is also prepared to shift pitch centres spontaneously so that the ritual musicians feel unconstrained, similar to the ritual.

The double bass in the current ensemble adds tonal depth by providing melodic content on the lower registers. In addition, it contributes to the group's sound by providing sonic and sound art textures using special effects pedals. This adds a completely new modern dimension to the music and presents an element which is familiar to the contemporary music listener.

5. Non-musical Issues and Challenges of Baliphonics

A significant challenge when attempting to promote and revive the *bali* ritual music to a local audience, is overcoming the response of the music being dismissed as irrelevant and old. An ensemble of the nature of Baliphonics faces this challenge by presenting some of the essential elements of the *bali* ritual music within a new musical context. Adaptation of the drumming language on to the Western drum set can be recognised as a significant contributing factor that would help towards gaining acceptance and new interest for the *bali* ritual music locally. The Baliphonics, in their performances, consciously attempt to break any old, negative conceptions and affiliations to the ritual music. For instance, currently during a performance, the singers wear a plain white costume as opposed to the fully blown ritual costumes. This also reduces the risk of the concerts being perceived as cultural exhibitions. The ensemble also exposes the rituals' music to an audience that is different from the public who currently follow traditional dance and drum concerts. Baliphonics performances are more likely to attract a contemporary audience interested in art and modernity, unlike the traditional ritual audiences who have little appreciation for the rituals' music.

Including the element of dance which is inseparable to the ritual music within a Baliphonics performance is believed to attract the most criticism locally. Being aware of this, the traditional artists of Baliphonics are weary of dancing on the Baliphonics stage locally. However, the author sees this as being detrimental to the development of the music as the artists naturally move and dance during the

rehearsal process. It is the author's belief that such unconsidered criticism halts development of the traditional arts.

A collaboration of the nature of Baliphonics would be hardly possible without a collective of serious and expert musicians who are open to experimentation. The relationships among the musicians must be built on long-standing trust and sincerity. It is imperative that the traditional artists involved have an attitude and urge to push the boundaries of their tradition. This attitude alone can attract a lot of criticism by conservative groups who do not encourage experimentation.

As the initiator of the Baliphonics ensemble, it is the author's sincere hope that each Baliphonics performance strives to achieve the spirit and embody the ritual so that the audiences locally and internationally would get a glimpse of how the ritual music would have been in its original setting.

End Notes

[1]The Low-Country drum, known as the *yak beraya*, is a double sided cylindrical drum, covered with cow intestines on both sides. Drumming in private rituals is mostly requested to be excluded or kept to a minimum due to noise restrictions in urban areas.

[2] Sandhoris Jayantha (1930-2008) was one of the most respected ritual drummers from the Raigama tradition.

[3]"Kotte refers to a southwesterly Kingdom, 1371 – 1597" (Sheeran 2000: 959).

[4] The story given here is based on an interview with Sandhoris Jayantha conducted by the author.

[5] During these years Prasantha performed extensively in many countries throughout Asia, Australasia and the United States.

[6] With these ensembles Susantha, like his brother, has toured extensively in Europe, Asia, Australasia and North America.

[7] Even though the artist included the term *tovile* (*tovil*), it is clearly a ritual stemming from the *bali* ritual and does not belong in the category of *tovil* rituals.

[8] The other pattern is *pūjā bera* introduced in Section 3.7.

[9] Simon Barker is an Australian musician who has adapted Korean traditional drumming into his playing. Dan Weiss is an American drummer who takes a similar approach but with Hindustani Tabla playing.

[10]Intentionally avoiding harmonic structures that evoke Western chord progressions.

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