

Bali InterMusic Festival 2011 – Music Without Borders



WARISAN INDONESIA / Hardy Mendröfa

June 30, 2011

A pre-event that unites music of the world, blends people without borders of nations. Everything dissolves along with the grand exotic nature of Ubud.

A visitor suddenly commented, “I just come by here and hear great music inside. So I got in and enjoy. I like to dance.” After he said that, he stood up and wiggled his body along with the rhythm of the song performed on stage. I was just dazed. I haven’t had the chance to ask his name or his country.

That evening in Ubud, there was something different in the air compared to previous days. Imagine, breezy winds helped sway the fire sparking out of bamboo planks lining up the courtyard around the Arma Café. As though they were background dancers for the pair of artists Anello “Lalloji” Capuano and Chika Asamoto showcasing their work. These two international musicians went onstage after Bona Alit, a Balinese group, opened the show.

The rhythm of these two nationalities (Anello is from Italy and Chika is from Japan) triggered a desire to sway—if hesitating to take part, then at least the audience feet are stomping—to the beat. The sound effect coming from Chika’s laptop generated bizarre sounds, characterized by her blowing on the Soprano Sax. Meanwhile, Anello was busy with different instruments from several countries. He shortly played the laute, or better known in this country as gambus. Then he played the veina, string instrument from India, and many others.

It is quite valid to call Anello a versatile musician. He has been working in the world of art for a dozen of years. He had joined ensembles in several European countries. His journey to Asia enhances his music reference and anchors his love to Bali as well. Now he lives in Denpasar and is busy with various projects. “I’ve travelled the globe because I love music. Furthermore, Asian music is very interesting,” he said backstage after the performance. I nodded agreeably, recalling some visitors who immediately stood up to dance without reserve as if being possessed by the tones of OHO (Orchid House Orchestra, a duo project with Chika), and gave a standing ovation every time Anello completed the arrangement of elaborate, yet beautiful, licks.

The Schwager & Lambert Quartet was the third group performing. Their pieces were well-marinated in jazz. In accordance with the concert theme “2011 Bali InterMusic Festival” it was quite worthy to include the four Canadian musicians as the performers. Franki Raden, the initiator of the event, said on February 19, that he wanted to emphasize that the world music does not know boundaries, so there is no need to categorize genres in exclusive boxes.

Music, whatever the genre, is uniting. Everyone understands its universal character. At least, Schwager and his friends maintained the concert’s dynamics. After emotions being spilled out, mixed among contemporary traditional music of Bona Alit and the world music style of Anello and Chika, it was the audience’s turn to relax with a cool and calming jazz. Booths of food vendors are busy serving the audience who were mostly foreigners.