

Maria Elena Bodmann

P 818/837-9485 • C 818/675-7815

An artist, musician, performer and business manager, Maria earned her BFA and MFA in Multidisciplinary Art and Music from the California Institute of the Arts (Cal Arts.) She studied music at the Hochschule der Kunste in Berlin, Germany, and was a Fulbright Scholar in Gamelan at the Indonesian Academy of Dance and the Arts (ASTI), and shadow theater in the village of Sukawati, Bali.

At Cal Arts (1980-84) Maria studied Performance Art, Instrument Building, and World Music. In 1981 she built ORGATORIUM, an original musical performance apparatus, consisting of a variety of chimes and drums constructed from industrial materials. Two major pieces “A Concert on the Pipe Organ” and “Across America/Made in Berlin” were performed at various events, including the 1984 Cal Arts Contemporary Music Festival and Cal Arts in Town. These presentations utilized transcriptions of medieval music, chance procedures, music concrete, tape manipulation, structured improvisation and new notation systems. Continuing with interdisciplinary endeavors at Cal Arts' MFA program (1985-88) Maria focused on Balinese arts, a culture dedicated to integrating the performing and visual arts.



With the intention of creating a new generation of shadow theater, Maria left for Bali in 1986 to learn the vast amount of material needed to perform traditional Balinese Wayang Kulit shadow play. As a Fulbright Scholar, she also received grants from the Republic of Indonesia to live and study in Bali for two years. Upon returning in 1988, she and partner Cliff DeArment founded Bali & Beyond, a performing arts company of Los Angeles artists inspired by the cultures of Indonesia. Since then she and Cliff continue to develop and present traditional Wayang Kulit and Gamelan music programs. They also produce original theater and musica; creations, and share their varied cultural offerings with audiences in the United States and Canada.

The Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles, has awarded Maria numerous Reginal Artists Grants and Artist in Residence Grants to produce and present traditional Wayang Kulit and creative shadow performances and residencies, including the prestigious COLA grant for creation of a new shadow play . Other awards include support from California Community Foundation's Brody Fund, California Council for the Humanities, the Durfee Foundation's Artist Resource Completion Grant and Puppeteers of America. She received four consecutive grants to teach “Making Shadow Characters”, a seventeen week residency for at risk high school students funded by Youth Arts Services, Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles. Maria's shadows are featured in Disney's "Camp Nowhere" and MGM's "Wild Bill", as well as “Images of Singapore” on Sentosa Island in Singapore. Maria is a long time faculty member of the California State Summer School for the Arts, guest artist for the Teenage Drama Workshop, CSUN, Northridge and past president of the Los Angeles Guild of Puppetry. With her company, Bali & Beyond, her featured credits include the Getty Museum, LACMA, the Huntington, Eastman School of Music, Cincinnati Conservatory, Oberlin, University of Calgary, Swarthmore, USC, UCLA, UC Santa Barbara, New West Symphony, Ventura Chamber Music Festival, National Geographic, Paramount's Star Trek: The Next Generation, the Hollywood Bowl, and many more.

Aside from her performance responsibilities, Maria manages the company by booking engagements in California and nationwide. Over the years her duties have included creating promotional materials, graphic design, placing cold calls, arranging travel and lodging, managing tours, and accounting. She writes grants and develops, publishes, and distributes promotional materials for the ensemble. Maria served as a field associate of David Lewiston on two CD releases (Nonesuch Record's “Bali: Gamelan & Kecak” and Bridge Record's: Kecak) hiring many fine ensemble performances in Bali in 1987. She was also the artist coordinator for the visiting Indonesian ensembles in the 1990 Los Angeles Festival.