

GAMELATRON

Sonic Kinetic Sculptures by Aaron Taylor Kuffner

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This book is a compilation of images of select sound producing kinetic sculptures, called Gamelatrons made by Aaron Taylor Kuffner, photographed primarily by the artist in his studio, on location and at exhibitions between 2015 - 2026.

The Gamelatron Project, 2008 - present

A Gamelatron is a sound producing kinetic sculpture presented as site-specific installations, and stand alone art works by sculptor and composer Aaron Taylor Kuffner. Gamelatrons are made from bronze, brass, titanium and iron instruments, often in a style similar to Indonesian gamelan gongs, retrofitted with mechanical mallets on sculptural mounting systems. The pieces are connected to a physical computing network that transcribes digital compositions into an array of electrical pulsations that results in a ghostly musical automaton. The artwork's mission is to expose us to the rich and profound nature of resonance and its effect on the psyche. Kuffner uses exhibitions of the Gamelatrons to create sanctuaries in public and private spaces. He views the body of the work as an offering to the observer. The collection of Gamelatron works are shown in diverse settings around the globe ranging from museums to retreat centers, spas, private homes, unique public spaces, educational institutions, cultural centers and at exceptional events. Over the last 18 years Kuffner has created over 100 Gamelatrons of various size, scale and purpose.

Aaron Taylor Kuffner

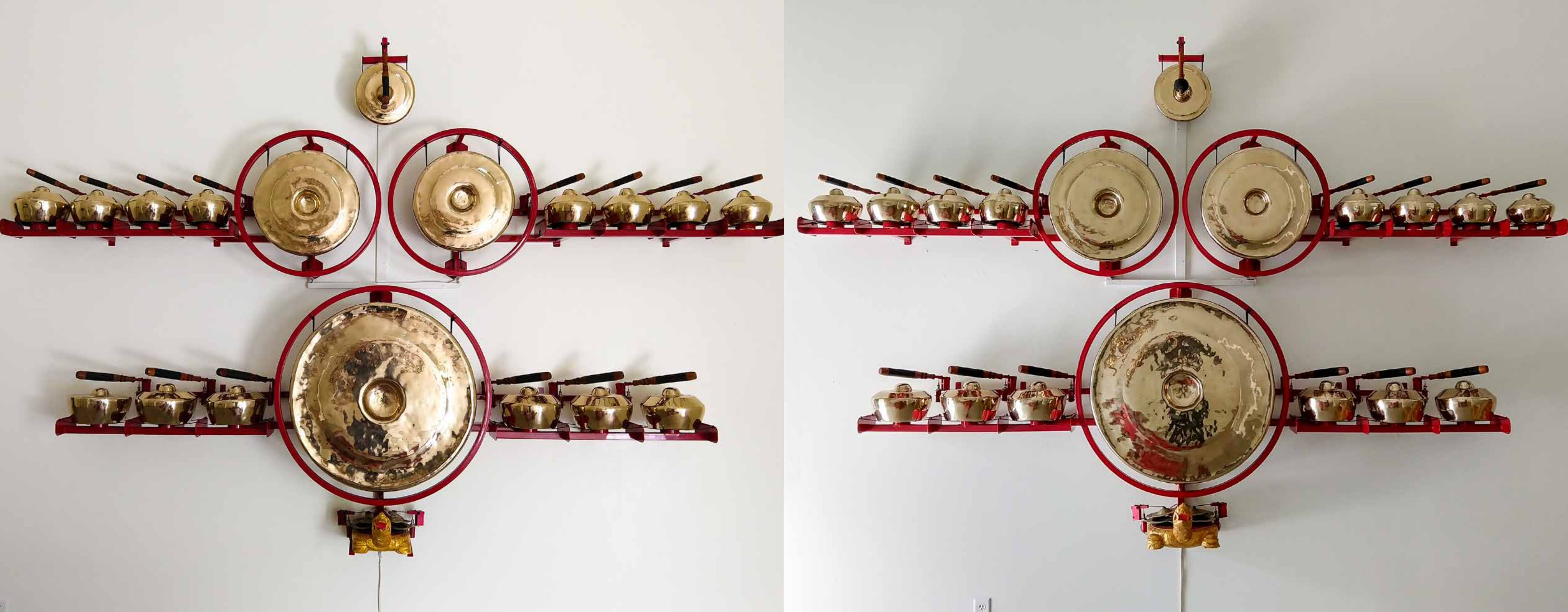
Aaron Taylor Kuffner is an American born conceptual artist, based in New York City. Kuffner's dynamic work reaches far outside conventional forms of representation: it actively engages its audience and pushes art to serve society. His pieces often take the form of multi-year projects that require in depth research, collaboration with field experts and the development of specialized skill sets. Each project provides unique conceptual tools that further the evolution of consciousness through the experience of beauty and the sublime. Through his work Kuffner has become a noted composer, a kinetic sculptor, electronic music maverick, a machinist, an installation artist, an ad-hoc engineer, an ambassador of Indonesian musical tradition, a prolific street artist, theater director, poetic terrorist, instrument builder, social activist, community radio advocate, surround sound pioneer, and producer of social sculptures and hyperbolic events ranging in scale from intimate finite happenings to the epic and fabled. As a solo artist, with the Gamelatron and other projects and collaborations, Kuffner has performed or presented work more than 400 times in 25 countries in the last twenty seven years. He has received numerous awards and grants, notably from The Andy Warhol Foundation, The Trust for Mutual Understanding, The New York Council for the Arts, The Soros Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Gamelatron artworks have been notably exhibited at the 56th Venice Biennale, The Hammer Museum, Smithsonian Renwick and Sackler galleries, Cincinnati Art Museum, Nassau County Museum of Art, The Oakland Museum of California, The Lyman Allyn Museum of Art and The Drawing Center.



Gamelatron Veja Yanta in the Mediation Sala, Phuket Thailand, 2016



Gamelatron Jiwa dan Raga, 2018 Diptych



Gamelatron Gandaberunda, 2017 Diptych





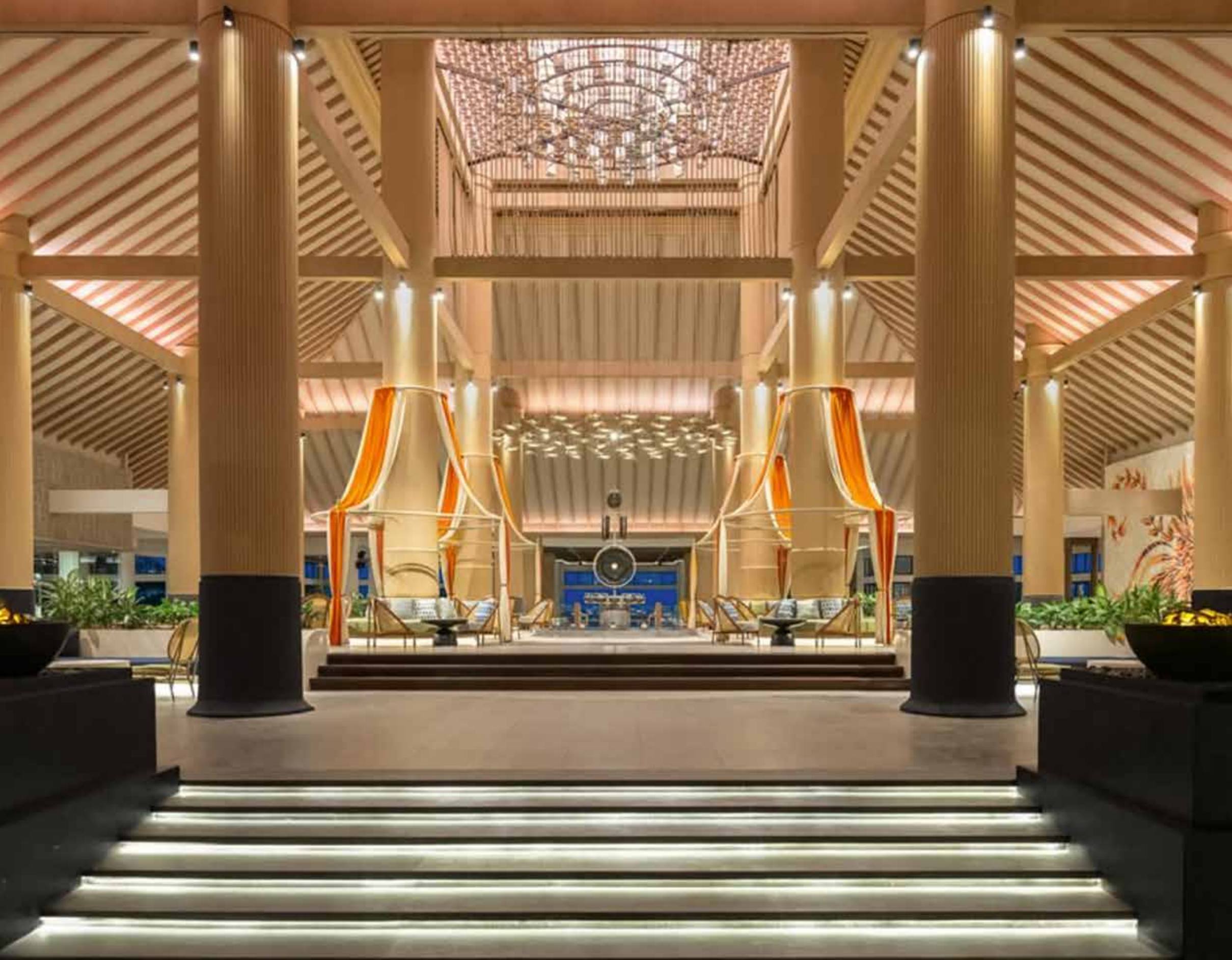
Gamelatron Bidadari, 2018 Quadratyh



Gamelatron Bidadari, 2018 (Details)



Gamelatron Pohon Electrum (Green Golden Trees), 2015



Gamelatron Suara Emas di Negeri Lada, 2025 Mövenpick Resort and Spa in Bintan Indonesia, photo by ISA art and design



Gamelatron Kilau (Sparkle), 2018





Gamelatron Cakrawala, 2017 at The Assemblage Park Ave. South NYC



Gamelatron Cakrawala (The line between heaven and earth), 2017 at Crossing Art Gallery NYC



Gamelatron Tanah Emas (The Golden Ground), 2016





Gamelatron Zaman Tembaga (The Age of Copper), 2016 photo by Seze Devres photography



Gamelatron Zaman Tembaga (The Age of Copper), In a Restored Chelsea Carriage House NYC 2019



Gamelatron Pohon Emas (Golden Trees), 2016



Gamelatron Pohon Emas in a Mediterranean Pool house, Beverly Hills 2016



Gamelatron Cemerlang (Bling), 2015



Gamelatron Cemerlang, World Trade Center Lobby Jakarta, 2022



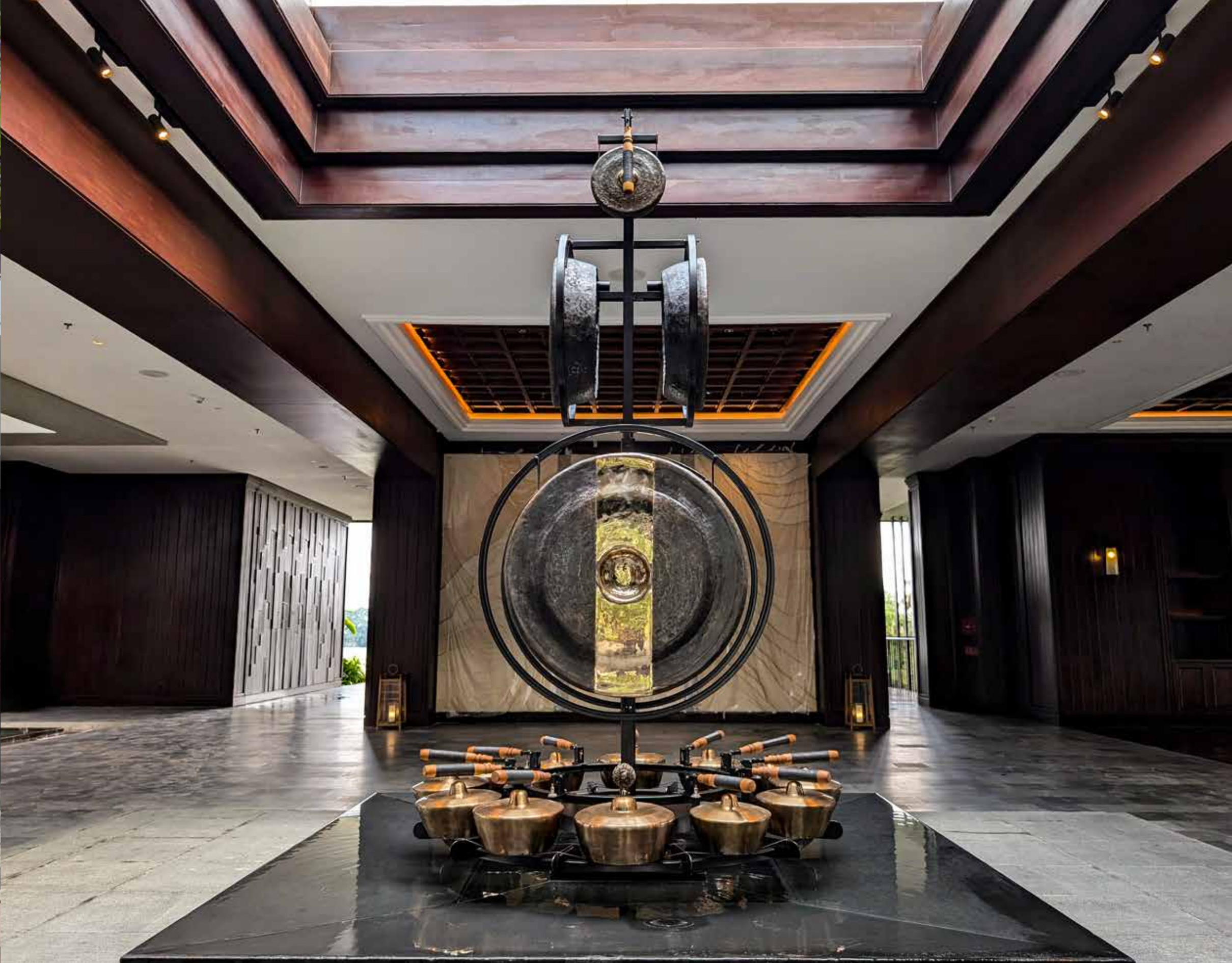
Gamelatron Huerta De Sonido (Sound Orchard), 2022



Gamelatron Huerta De Sonido (Sound Orchard), 2022 in Costa Careyas Mexico



Gamelatron Cahaya di Hati (Light of the Heart) 2021



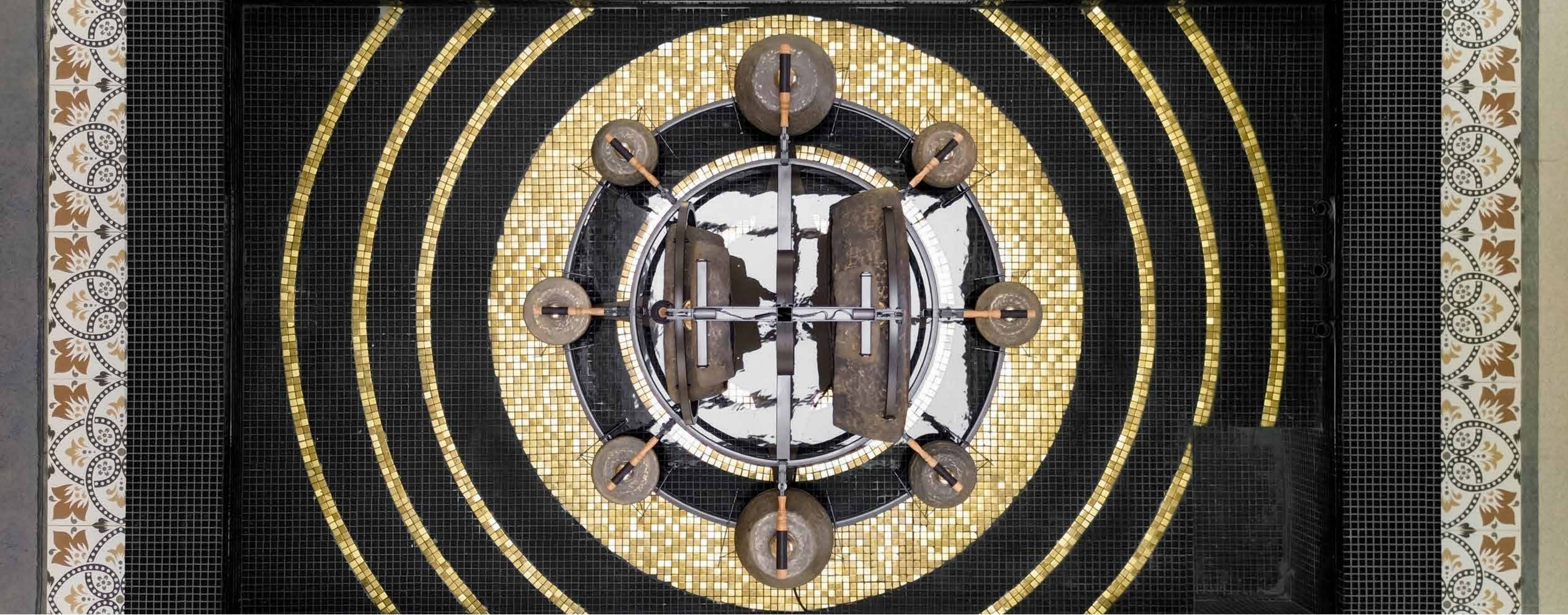
Gamelatron Tirta Swara (the sound of holy water), 2024 at Anantara Resort in Ubud Bali, Indonesia



Gamelatron Tirta Swara (the sound of holy water), 2024 at Anantara Resort in Ubud Bali, Indonesia



Gamelatron Tangan Ke Hati (Hand on heart), 2025 at Kaleidoscope Desert Sanctuary in Morongo Valley, CA



Gamelatron Shakya(muni), 2025 at the Lotusa Hotel Batulicin in Kalimantan Indonesia



Gamelatron Shakya(muni), 2025 at the Lotusa Hotel Batulicin in Kalimantan Indonesia



Gamelatron Roh Mengalir (The Spirit Flows), 2020 West Village Loft, NYC



Gamelatron Raga, Jiwa dan Keesaan (Bidy, Soul and Oneness), 2025 Triptych



Gamelatron Raga, Jiwa dan Keesaan (Bidy, Soul and Oneness), 2025 Triptych, Private Home, Jakarta Indonesia



Gamelatron Perantara (The Medium), 2019 Tribeca Loft, NYC





Gamelatron Mountain Crown, 2022



Gamelatron Mountain Crown, 2022 Private home in Boulder, CO



Gamelatron KawanMu (your companion) in Blues and Greens, 2026, private home in North Carolina



Gamelatron Guacamaya azul y oro (blue and gold macaw), 2025



Gamelatron Guacamaya azul y oro in an old stone country house in Catalonia, 2026



Gamelatron Roh Kembar en Rosa (Twin Spirits in Pink), 2024





Gamelatron Roh Kembar en Rosa (Twin Spirits in Pink), 2024 Private Living Room in Silicon Valley



Gamelatron SenyumSita, 2018



Gamelatron Amoghasi(ddhi), 2025



Gamelatron Murniati, 2015 (1 of 3 parts)



Gamelatron Hadiah Penyembuhan (Healing Gift), 2021



Gamelatron Berkah Tenang (The Calm Blessing), 2024



Gamelatron Dicentra Emas, 2024



Gamelatron Auric Moonstone, 2026



Gamelatron Lengkung Riak (Curved Ripple), 2017



Gamelatron Dewiita Hijau (Small Green Goddess), 2025



Gamelatron IndigoRoh, 2025



Gamelatron Semesta Emas (Golden Universe), 2022



Gamelatron Golden Moons, 2020



Gamelatron Hada Dorada (Golden Fairy), 2026



Gamelatron Mele Mata Ijo (Melody of Green Eyes), 2023



Gamelatron Bintang Biru, (The Blue Star), 2020



Gamelatron Roh Pendamping (Companion Spirit), 2025



Gamelatron Sembuh Sayang (Be Well Darling), 2024



Gamelatron Sembuh Sayang (Be Well Darling), 2024 at Heal House in King City, Ontario



Gamelatron Ombak4 with wood sculptures by Daniel Popper, 2023





Gamelatron Tonosangel with wood sculptures by Daniel Popper, 2026



Gamelatron Gelombang Dewa-Dewi (Sound waves of the gods and goddess), 2014 (1 part of 6), Foyer of a Private Home, Jakarta Indonesia



Gamelatron AyuIndah, 2024 Westport, CT



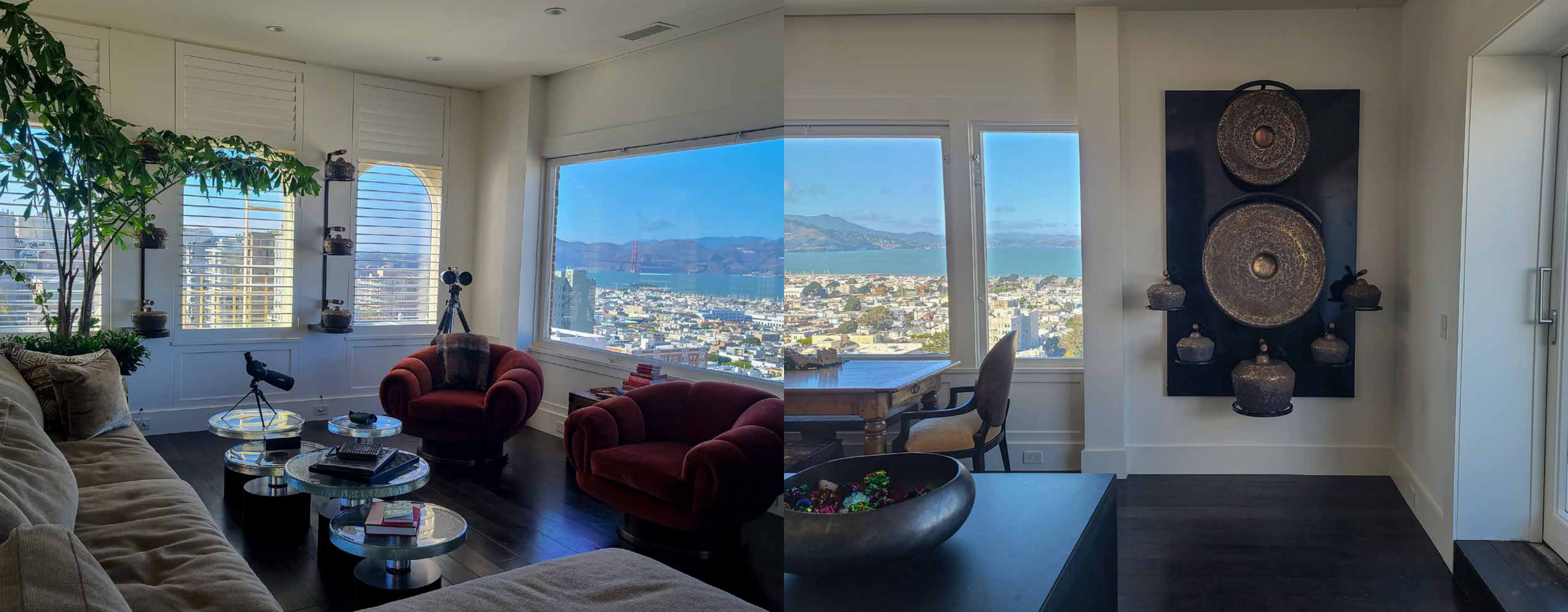
Gamelatron Rasa Tenang Masuk (The Feeling of Calm Enters), 2017 Union Square Triplex, NYC



Gamelatron Little Crown, 2017 West Village Rooftop Lounge, NYC



Gamelatron Sentuhan Lembut (The Soft Touch), 2013 West Village Loft, NYC



Gamelatron Megah Teluk (The Magnificent Bay), 2022 San Francisco



Gamelatron Biru Abadi, 2021 Naples, Florida



Gamelatron Sayap Emas (Golden Wing), 2017 Staten Island, NYC



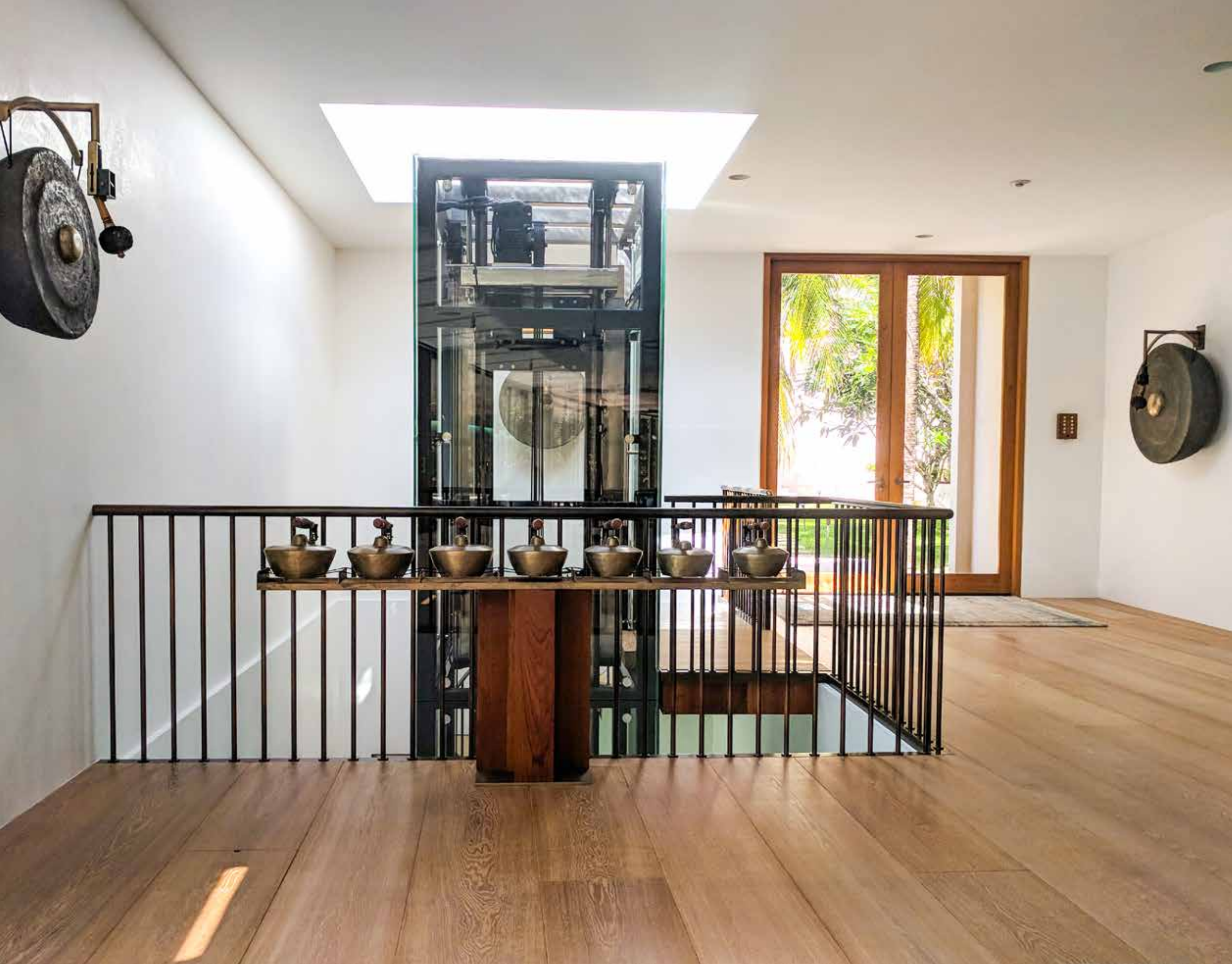
Gamelatron Tanager in White and Gold, 2026 in a Private Home in Park City Utah



Gamelatron Lunacitas, 2024 Rooftop hot tub in San Francisco



Gamelatron Jiwa (Soul), 2017 in a Private Spa Phuket, Thailand



Gamelatron Jiwa (Soul), 2017 in a Private Spa Phuket, Thailand



Gamelatron, What does this look like?



Gamelatron Kenaikan Damai (Ascend in Peace), Jakarta 2022



Gamelatron Segitiga (triangle) in Bronze, 2015 at John Hardy Showroom Soho, NYC



Gamelatron Perhiasan Emas di Awan Hitam (Golden Jewels in a cloud of black), 2019 at John Hardy Showroom Las Vegas



Gamelatron Maritrip, 2022 Hotel Lobby Yogyakarta



Gamelatron Pemanggil (The Caller), 2017 Private Retreat, Westchester, NY



Gamelatron Veja Yanta, 2015 Outdoor Dining Lounge Thailand



Gamelatron Suara Abaco, 2017 Bahamas Poolside Lounge



Gamelatron Twilight Flower, 2021 Koi Pond, Jakarta



Gamelatron Cloud Singer, 2022 Manhattan Balcony



Gamelatron Taman Suara, 2020 1 part of 7, Brooklyn Garden



Gamelatron Rainbow Waves, 2022 Patio Jakarta



Single Tone Mindfulness Sculpture Pulse: 82 Hertz, 2018 at theThe Assemblage John Street, NYC



Single Tone Mindfulness Sculpture 64hz, 2016

Body Phones are like headphones for the entire body. They are an ongoing series of Gamelatron artworks.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, I was involved in sound systems and rave culture. Along with some friends, I helped build several sound systems, and I particularly enjoyed working on the massive bass bins at the base of the speaker stacks. These bins were designed to produce sub-bass frequencies, typically in the 35–60 hertz range. At our parties, there would always be “bass huggers”—people who would press their heads against the bins and wrap their arms around the vibrating boxes, bouncing along with the beat. Those low frequencies, which fall below the standard “musical” spectrum, made it clear that sound is a physical force; the entire body is a receptive vessel, not just a tool for the brain to process intellectual stimuli.

When I began learning to forge gongs from master craftsmen in Indonesia, I discovered that the largest traditional hand-forged bronze gongs were typically 80–90 cm (32–36 inches) in diameter, resonating at 45–50 hertz. While a few people in the Gamelan tradition have made slightly larger gongs (100–105 cm), it is uncommon. Even those larger gongs usually resonate at 45–50 hertz because the material must be made thicker to support the wider expanse while maintaining its resonance. I do not think it is a coincidence that across diverse acoustic musical traditions, the lowest note for instruments like the contrabass, piano, or tuba is usually around 45 hertz. While the human ear can perceive sounds down to 20 hertz, our musical traditions generally bottom out around 42 hertz. Between 20 and 40 hertz, we tend to feel sound as a physical vibration rather than discern it as a musical note. For instance, an idling diesel engine rumbling at 31 hertz is perceived by most people as a low vibration, not as the note B, an octave below the lowest key on a piano.

Many factors determine a gong’s primary resonant frequency, but the three main ones are material (bronze, steel, titanium, etc.), diameter, and thickness. Supplemental factors include the gong’s contours and the forming technique. I set out to create gongs with a resonant frequency below 42 hertz. However, the inherent rigidity of forged bronze—which gives it such excellent resonance—made it difficult to create gongs both large and thin enough to hit those lower frequencies. I began working with 3mm sheet steel, which has high tensile strength and can be cold-formed and welded. This allowed me to create 120–150 cm (48–59 inch) gongs that resonate between 32 and 41 hertz. I am currently experimenting with titanium sheets as well.

Inspired in part by those “bass huggers,” I designed these artworks so that people can experience the sub-bass frequencies of these oversized gongs at close range with their entire body. The compositions I write for them are not intended to be “musical” in the traditional sense; rather, they serve as a form of sound massage. The experience is like being inside a womb or a metaphorical cloud of bass. I intend for the work to demonstrate the physical nature of sound and to be stimulating enough to overwhelm the ego’s internal dialogue, fostering a meditative state. When I ask people to sit inside a *Body Phones* piece, I usually tell them to “take a dose.”



Body Phones 39Hz, 2018 with Nathan



Body Phones 39Hz at the Academy Art Museum, Easton Maryland 2019



Body Phones 39Hz in the Mill House, Rhinebeck, NY 2022



Body Phones 38Hz, 2025 with Aaron Taylor



Body Phones Gamma 36Hz, 2026 with Rania



Body Phones Gamma 36Hz, 2026



Body Phones 41Hz, 2025 with Kate



Body Phones Gamma Ombak, in the Hay Loft Rhinebeck, NY 2022



Gamma Tech, Lyman Allyn Museum, CT 2021

The Infinite Nature of Resonance

Words by Kamau Zuberi Akabueze, HDMe :: Curator in Residence & Gamelatron Sonic Sanctuary Collaborative Steward

It began as a vibration in 2016. The sound of the Gamelatron :: these sonic kinetic sculptures rooted in ancient tradition and augmented by the mind of Aaron Taylor Kuffner :: struck a chord within my body that never left. I took a card from that first encounter, and it sat on my desk for years, a quiet placeholder for an attunement set in motion. When I finally met Aaron in 2021, the alignment was undeniable. That singular, lingering frequency had been carrying me toward the right moment for 1000 Ways to Sit to emerge.

At its core, 1000 Ways to Sit is a sonic sanctuary in sculptural form. Housed within Heron Arts in San Francisco, it offered a public immersion into the layered experience of resonance through stillness, space, and sound. The atmospheric guide for this journey was Gamelatron ViaOro, a 10-part acoustic robotic orchestra featuring 44 specially tuned gongs and metal phones. Spanning six pitch registers and descending into the 30 Hz range, the gongs produce waveforms that resonate at the cellular level. This is not performance; it is vibratory presence. It is an environment intentionally designed to help the nervous system remember its own peace.

Inspired by Joseph Campbell’s monomyth, 1000 Ways to Sit proposed that the hero’s journey inward begins exactly where you are. The sanctuary offered an expansive topography of seating :: carved benches, ritual stools, sculptural stones :: reminding us that there is no single, correct posture for meditation. Visitors were invited to remove their shoes, stow their phones, and allow their breath to be their guide. The premise was simple yet profound: you do not need to do anything special. The true meditative seat is wherever one finds harmony with peace.

As Curator in Residence, I witnessed the profound exchange between sound-infused air and human ecosystems. The sanctuary became a space of pure interaction, where the radiance of human presence met the ancient, algorithmic harmonies of the Gamelatron. It did not matter if a participant had prior experience with meditation or sonic art; the vibratory truth of the space bypassed the intellect and spoke directly to the body. Unprompted responses echoed through the gallery: “That was the nervous system reset that my body needed,” “I am leaving here in a better day than I arrived,” and, from a Creative Steeping participant, “Are you sure there are no psychedelics in this tea?”

These moments revealed the alchemical signature of the sanctuary. The gongs send signals through space, the body receives without instruction, and resonance occurs at its own frequency. In a time of noise, speed, and disorientation, 1000 Ways to Sit served as a profound reminder that we are all capable of harmonizing with the symphony singing within us. It will always be boundless gift to witness humanity at peace, proving that when we pause inside a space built for mental rest, the invisible magnetism of life becomes undeniably tangible. 1000 Ways to Sit.



1000 Ways to Sit, 2025 entry wall at Heron Arts, San Francisco



Gamelatron ViaOro with *Earth Biji* light sculptures by Adelle Lin and Matt Pinner at *1000 ways to sit* at Heron Arts in San Francisco, 2025

Wall Text in the Gamelatron Sanctuary for the *Songs Without Words* exhibition November 20, 2021 – March 6, 2022

Words by Charles A. Riley II, Ph.D. director of the Nassau County Museum of Art

Enter The Gamelatron

At its fundamental level, music is the reverberation through the air of a wave generated at one material point, the bell or gong, that reaches the delicate resonating structure of the ear. Where it “goes” from there, neurologically and psychologically, is a matter of consciousness. Making this miraculous phenomenon visible, making us aware of what a tone really is and how it becomes a musical pitch, takes a mind capable of exploring the very nature of sound and its passage across the distance between its origin and our perception. The Gamelatron made for this gallery space in the context of the surrounding landscape in this season brings together the lyricism of music, the light and color of sculpture, the long history of metalworking and the logic of technology in one astonishingly original work of art. It is a “musical offering” (Musikalisches Opfer) way beyond the secular sense meant by Bach. It bridges the gap between the rationality of design and the spiritual experience of the sublime.

The Gamelatron is the brainchild of a remarkable artist whose long apprenticeship with gamelan players and artisans in Indonesia along with his expertise in the physics of sound and the engineering behind automation place him in a league of his own. He speaks with passion of the musical nature of the making of the gongs, as one artisan turns the bronze disk while two others rhythmically beat the shimmering pattern into its surface. He senses on the molecular level the passage of the sound waves along the crystalline network of the alloy (itself a technological innovation that shaped the very history of man). Over the long course of creating this complex and monumental work, as he composed the music, he made a compositional move to bring more silence (“air”) into its layered texture. The rhythmic pulse, the seductive descending bass figure, and the fading three chimes at the close are just a few details to savor as you listen.

Pressed by the museum for the standard artist photo and biography for this wall text, Kuffner demurred. A salient detail from his career is his background as a street artist, theater director working with actors with disabilities and community radio advocate whose many talents have been placed in the service of community. His humility is insistent: “I am just the vehicle. There are different ways of accessing resonance, and I should not be in the way.”



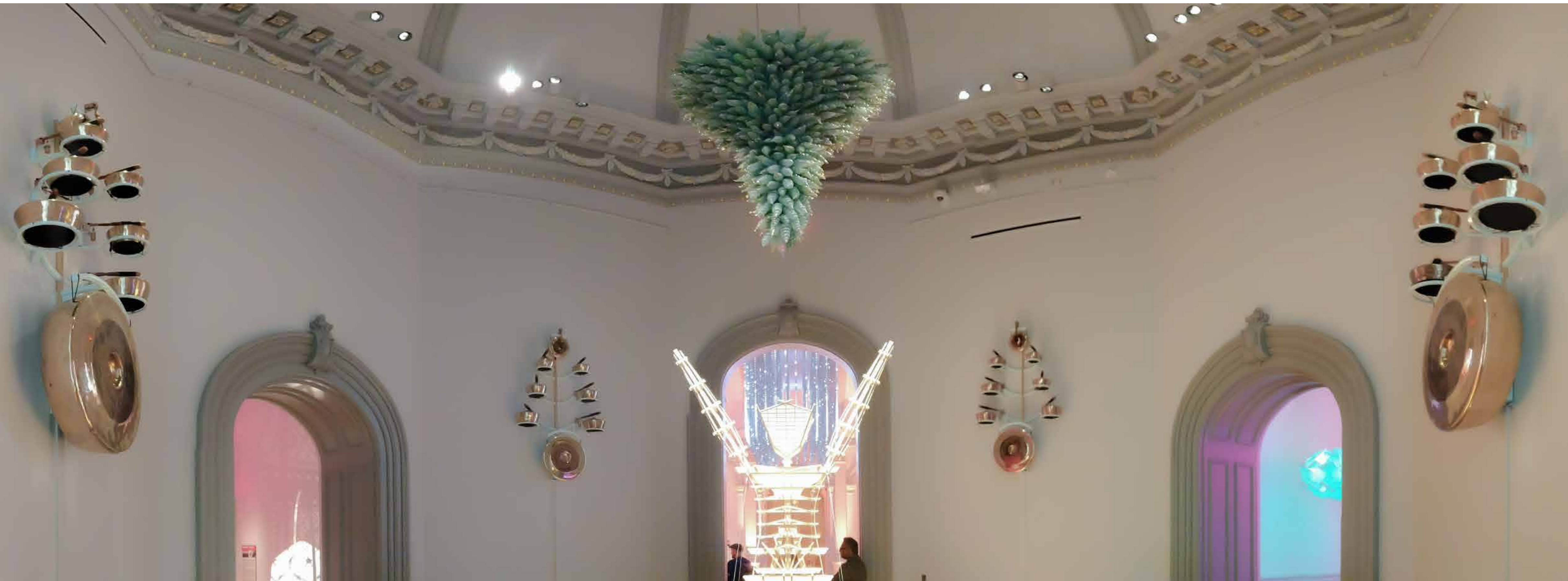
Gamelatron Sanctuary, Nassau County Museum of Art, 2022



Gamelatron Bunganya Dewa (Flowers of the Gods), 2016 The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA



Gamelatron Empat Bunga (Four FLOWers), 2015 at the 56th Venice Biennale Palazzo Grimani Museum Venice, Italy



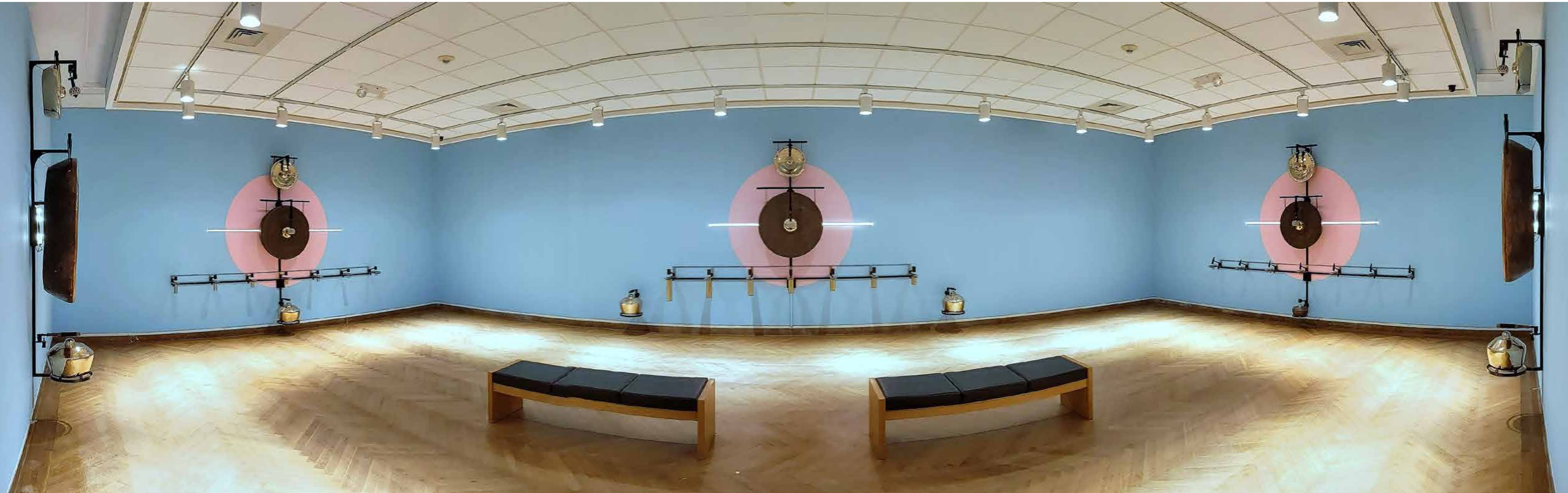
Gamelatron Bidadari (Nymph), 2018 at the Smithsonian Renwick Gallery Washington, DC



Gamelatron Bidadari (Nymph), 2019 at the Cincinnati Art Museum



Gamelatron Roh Ageng with Light Panels By John Taylor, Resonance in Light, Heron Arts 2021, San Francisco



Gamelatron Roh Ageng (Great Spirit), 2021 The Lyman Allyn Museum of Art, New London, CT



Gamelatron Roh Ageng 2016, The Drawing Center, NYC with Louise Despont



Gamelatron Bidadari, Rockefeller Center, 2023-24



Gamelatron Suara Sinar (The Sound of Light), 2017 The Chimney Brooklyn, NY



Gamelatron ViaOro with Volumetric Light Sculpture by Mark Slee and John Taylor at Resonance in Light, Heron Arts, 2024 San Francisco

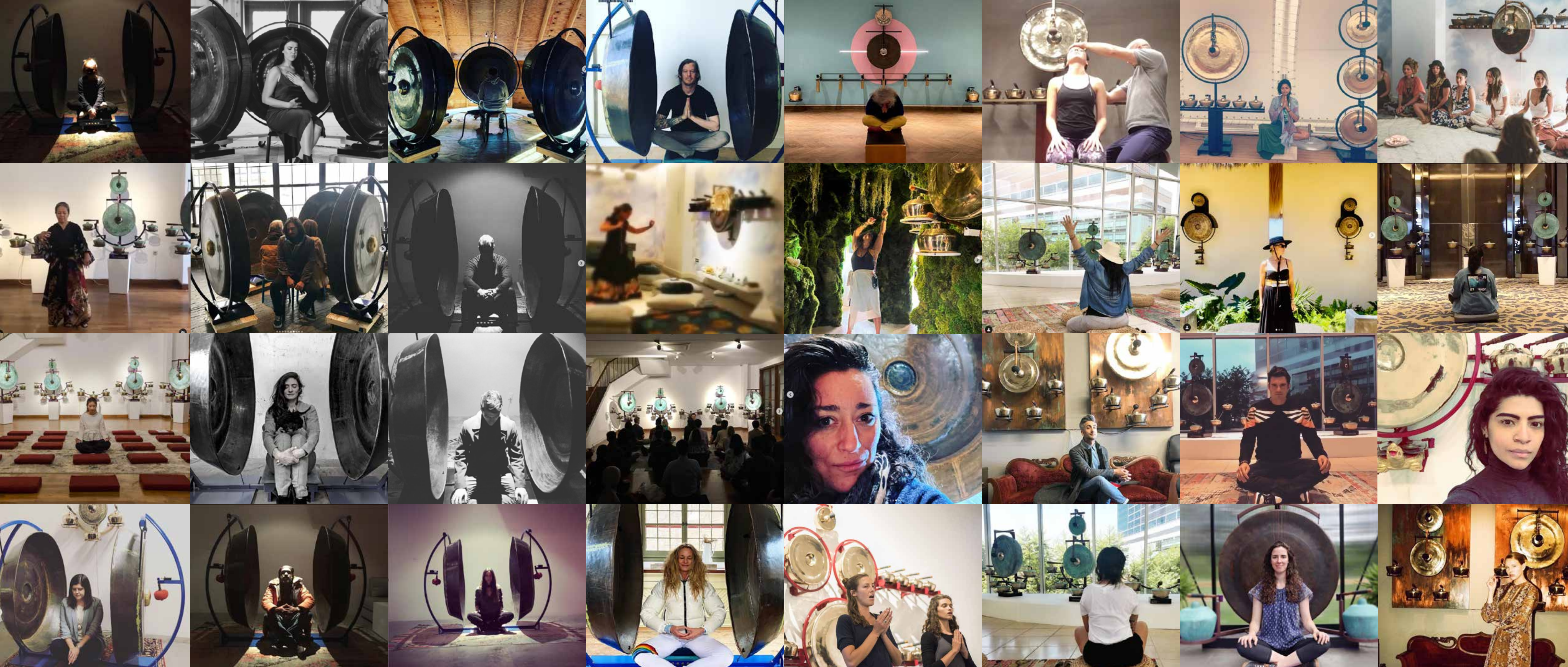


Exhibition View at Crossing Art Gallery, New York 2018



Gamelatron Gandaberunda, 2017 in the Man Base, Black Rocks, NV







Appreciation

Special thanks and praise to the people and teams I work with, learn from and have grown with during this project, especially but not limited to Eric Singer, John Parts Taylor, JoeJoe Martin, Mark Slee, Nathan Wheeler, I Made and I Wayan Rindhi, Agus Purnomo, Agus Feri Supoyo, I Wayan Senen, I Wayan Sadra, Kamau Akabueze, Deborah Iskandar, Jessica Eisenthal, Deni Supriyanto, Clara Darason, Jennifer Houdrouge, Seze Devres, Dr. Jennifer Noe Parker, Aurora Crowley, Shrine, Thea Rea, Maya Galbis, Drew Feuer, Sheena Bizarre, Geoff Kuffner, I Made Sudika, Kate Raudenbush, Deb Yoon, Dok Gregory, Eric Ayote, Kelvin Daly, Danielle Hlatky, Laurel Leckert, Ryan O’connor, William Etundi, Erin Ellen Kelly, Andrew Erdos, Jeanne Angel, Bryan Kasenic, Masha Gitin, Brenna Chase, Peter Principle, Alana Heiss, Gaylen Hamilton, ISA Art and Design, Sundaram Tagore Galleries, Heron Arts, Abbot and Abbot box, Dewi and Mekar Cargo, Tru-Tone Anodizing, Avant Guards Coatings, and Magnet-Schultz America to name a few.



