

RECORDINGS IN NATURAL CAVES

INDONESIA – JAVA

Goa Tabuhan

Donorojo, Central Java

RIC-IDJ1 United States 2005

CAVE MUSIC *

RIC – Speleolithophonic – Instrumental & vocal – Cave Pic Cover

Selections:

1. Reogkan – 3:35 (3:15)/ 2. Caping Gunung – 3:42/ 3. Mung Slirama – 8:01 (10:12)/ 4. Pangkur – 2:37 (9:04)/ 5. Lorobronto – 4:36/ 6. Stasion Balapan – 1:36 (2:51)/ 7. Lingsir Wengi – 11:07 (2:25)/ 8. Kangen – 3:04/ 9. Kutut Mangung – 6:23 (5:30)/ 10. (Untitled) – 4:23

Perf: **ANGUDILARAS SELOARGO**

(with chant & hand drum)

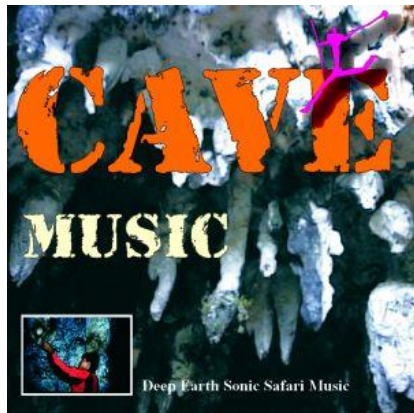
Prod. Co: Jonkey Enterprises; Glendale, CA

Rec. Eng: Chuck Jonkey

Time: (See above – with some discrepancies)

CD: CAVE MUSIC

Jonkey Enterprises (?) (Tks 1 to 9)



Notes: The Goa Tabuhan (Gamelan Cave) is located in south-central Java between Wonogiri and Donojo. The concerts are held in the main chamber. Hutton described these concerts as consisting of a hand drum that sets the cadence plus an old man and six boys who take position next to the thick stalactites where each taps out notes. The music starts, pure gamelan melodies resonate, as each stalactite vibrates and sings like a monstrous tuning fork. The old man is the best. With two taps striking within a few centimeters of each other on the same column he can produce notes in perfect harmony. In ten minutes three melodies were played. (Hutton 1978) At that time stones were used to tap on the stalactites, which obviously caused considerable damage. For this recorded concert padded mallets were used. The word “speleolithophonic” has been coined and used for the first time in this discography to designate speleothem percussion

music where stalactites, stalagmites or calcite draperies are tapped to obtain notes.

Much as François Jouffa had done in 1974 recording gamelan music and bats in Bali (see under Recordings in Natural Caves – Indonesia – Bali – *Grotte de Goa Lawah* – [RIC-IDB1](#)), Chuck Jonkey went to Java and during his travels recorded a percussion-chant concert in this cave. Jonkey describes the concert – “Four village men pound stalactites in the cave to create an amazing melodic, rhythmic background...a drummer then adds a brisk tribal beat. Add village women singing the local dialect and you’ve got an unforgettable experience.” (Jonkey n.d.)

The running times given on the disc do not always correspond to the actual running times (see above) and there are actually 10 selections on this CD rather than the 9 listed in the record cover.



This is linear oriental music with repeated rhythmic patterns set down by the hand drum and the speleothem percussions that go on and on backed by chanting voices. In many of these selections the rhythm patterns sound very much alike, but close audition shows the slight differences. In some pieces there are several spots where the rhythm slows down and everything stops right in the middle of a piece, there is a more or less long silence before picking up and continuing as if they were performing several variants of the same piece. For “Pangkur” the rhythm is supplemented by a slower beat on a deep resounding drapery. Some pieces have the women chanting and others it’s a man. “Kangen” has a distinct change of rhythm over halfway through. “Kutut Mangung” and last unidentified track are somewhat similar where the man and the women sing alternately so perhaps these two tracks represent two parts of the same piece or two separate takes.

A short video presenting the cave and showing the speleothem percussion music and chant in the cave can be viewed on [YouTube](#). Here the main percussionist, Suranto, with his two assistants tap on the thick draperies with wooden mallets while three women chant and another man plays an Indonesian drum. The lower photo here shows Suranto and two women sitting on stone bench who chant. The pictures and video show that there is considerable wear on the calcite draperies at the spots where the musicians strike.

Ref: Chuck Jonkey, Biography, Home Site, [sonicsafarimusic](#)

Chuck Jonkey, Cave Music CD, [Amazon.fr](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLES)

Chuck Jonkey, Cave Music CD, [7digital](#) (◀AUDIO SAMPLES)

Hutton, Peter 1978, *Java*, APA Productions, Singapore, Les Editions du Pacifique, p. 218-219

Goa Tabuhan, Indehnya Gamelan dalam Goa Tabuhan – Pacitan (4:08), [YouTube](#) (◀AUDIO-VIDEO)

Goa Tabuhan, Pacitan, Photos by Archiaston Musamma, [pbase](#)

Jonkey, Chuck n.d., Cave Music, Sonic Safari Homepage, [sonicsafarimusic](#)

Anon; 2012, Tabuhan Cave, (in English – poor translation), [eastjava](#) & Goa Tabuhan, (in Indonesian), [eastjava](#)

[caveinspiredmusic.com](#)