

LUNGUN MUSIC: THE BATAK TOBA ANDUNG VOCAL INTERPRETATION IN CHAMBER MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

Lungun is a musical piece inspired by the andung Batak tradition of grief singing, expressing sorrow for a loved one. Andung songs are chanted by a pangandung (poet) using hata andung verses (Toba Batak fine literature) whose content tells the life history of someone who has died. Nowadays, the andung tradition has shifted, and many people cannot practice it; This is because many younger generations can no longer speak with hata andung, andung singing tends to be replaced with spiritual songs. Andung is unique in terms of lyrical and musical, andung is even a cultural heritage that the Batak community itself should preserve. The above problem requires the creator to work on Lungun music, which aims to discover the musical form and symbolic meaning. The method used is panca sthiti ngawi sani, which consist of five stages: (1) inspiration (ngawirasa), (2) exploration (ngawacak), (3) conception (ngarencana), (4) execution (ngawangun) and (4) production

(ngabah). Lungun's musical work incorporates elements such as the Toba Batak scales, processed andung vocals, hata andung poems, rhythm processing, and Gondang Sabangunan playing techniques into chamber music performances. Lungun music has three parts: part I is mula-mula (beginning), part II is andung (vocal lamentation singing), and part III is poda (message). The symbolic meaning expressed in Lungun music refers to the values found in the Toba Batak community: the Dalihan Na Tolu Batak philosophy, the five levels of Toba Batak death, and the seven Toba Batak philosophies.

Keywords: lungun, andung, gondang sabangunan, chamber music

INTRODUCTION

At the Toba Batak traditional death ceremony, there is a tradition that is always carried out by the community, namely the *mangandung* (wailing) tradition. *Mangandung* comes from the word *andung* (wailing), which expresses deep sorrow in the Batak language, which is very subtle, beautiful, and full of sadness for someone who is loved (Sihombing, 1986, p. 26). *Andung* can be defined as a sad song that shows personal sadness, using the *andung* language sung by a *pangandung* (poet) while chanting, crying, and moving his hands with deep expression. The poems chanted generally tell the life history of someone who has passed away, expressions of self-sorrow, expressions of lamentation, and teachings of good values for *andung* listeners. The language used in *andung* poetry is *hata andung* (Batak subtle literature), which is differs from the daily Batak language. The *andung* language has a value of politeness and beauty, connotative or figurative meaning. The hand gesture performed by the *pangandung* is called *mangalap tondi na mate* or *mangalap sahala ni na mate*, which aims to take the *sahala* (blessings) of the deceased to himself

and to his descendants.

The *mangandung* tradition for the Toba Batak community is sacred, because *andung* is a person's prayer to *Mula Jadi Na Bolon* (God in the Batak tribe who still adheres to animism) with the mediation of *tondi* (spirits) which aims that all the sadness and suffering experienced by the *pangandung* can be lifted or healed by *Mula Jadi Na Bolon*. In death ceremonies, *andung* is the final honor for the deceased. Unfortunately, the *andung* tradition, once a vibrant community activity, is now on the verge of extinction. The inability of many in the younger generation to speak *hata andung* and the influence of religion have led to a decline in its practice (Siregar et al., 2020, p. 17). *Andung* is being replaced by spiritual songs, shifting the focus from the original *andung*. According to Panggabean (Panggabean et al., 2022), the *andung* was a vital part of the Toba Batak community, with mourners often attending funerals solely to witness *andung*. This decline in *andung's* practice underscores the importance of preserving and documenting its essence through musical works like *Lungun*.

The above problems encourage the composer to create a musical work to reflect *andung* from the composer's

empirical experience and knowledge of the *andung* tradition. The work created is entitled *Lungun*. In Batak language terms, *Lungun* means sadness or sadness. The *Lungun's* music represents the experience of sadness and a form of self-reflection of the composer as a Toba Batak *andung* practice. In addition, the anxiety about the existence of *andung* became the basis for creating the music piece *Lungun*. The composer sees that the *andung* tradition is not just an expression of sadness but has reflective potential in music creation. *Andung* has several extra-musical elements that could be translated into music, such as: (1) the atmosphere of sadness, (2) the intensity of sadness, (3) spontaneity, (4) the use of *hata andung*, (5) *pangandung* interaction, (6) *pangandung* expression, and (7) *pangandung* body response. In *Lungun's* music, *andung* is interpreted through a neo-classical chamber music performance (a musical style that borrows styles from previous traditions, cultures, or eras with the use of string instruments (violin, cello, and contrabass), piano, oboe, *batak sulim*, *hesek*, *taganing batak*, and vocal *andung*). The selection of chamber music performance form is based on its simple presentation form, with a small

number of musicians. Chamber music emphasizes nonverbal communication and empathy between musicians, paying more attention to listening to other musicians when playing a piece without being guided by a music conductor (Sacks, 2016, p. 23). Based on this understanding, the composer wants to apply chamber music playing to *lungun* music, which emphasizes the ability of nonverbal communication between players by listening to each other and reading music scores without the guidance of a music conductor. The composer also wants to use the acoustic echo of the room as a sound conductor of the musical instruments used, thus minimizing the use of a sound system. This article will discuss the transfer of the Toba Batak *andung* tradition into the form of chamber music, which aims to develop music based on Batak local wisdom. Through *Lungun* music, the composer wants to add a new color to the chamber music ensemble. The problems that will be discussed are (1) the form of *Lungun* music and (2) the meaning contained in *Lungun* music.

METHODOLOGY

The creation of the musical work *Lungun* uses the *Panca Sthiti Ngawi Sani* method by I Wayan Dibia. According to (Dibia, 2021, p. 34), the creation process consists of five stages: (1) inspiration (*ngawirasa*), (2) exploration (*ngawacak*), (3) conception (*ngarencana*), (4) execution (*ngawangun*) and (5) production (*ngebah*). *Ngawirasa* is the stage when a creator gets the inspiration to create. *Ngawi* (Kawi language) means making or creating, and *rasa* (Balinese) means feeling. Combining the two words means starting to feel a strong desire to create (Dibia, 2021, p. 34). In the *ngawirasa* stage, the composer drew on empirical experience in 2013, which saw first-hand the tradition of *mangandung* (wailing). The experience is embedded in the imaginative mind, encouraging it to be actualized in a musical composition.

The exploration (*ngawacak*) stage is a meticulous process where an art creator delves deep to finalize the idea or concept of their work. This involves reading relevant literature sources and observing life activities that can be used as working material (Dibia, 2021, p. 40). At this stage, a thorough search is conducted to gather a comprehensive collection of data and information. This search involves reading articles that discuss the *andung* tradition and conducting interviews with artists, a testament to the dedication and depth of the exploration process. Based on the search results, the *mangandung* tradition consists

of two elements: *andung* (lament singing) and *Gondang Sabangunan* music (death ceremony accompaniment music). The presentation of *Andung* and *Gondang Sabangunan* is differentiated based on the level of the death ceremony. *Gondang Sabangunan* is always performed as the opening and closing of a traditional ceremony that serves as a tribute to the deceased's spirit and aims to deliver the spirit to the afterlife (Interview Lamro Parulian Sinaga, February 2024). *Gondang Sabangunan* usually presented at the highest level of the death ceremony, the *saur matua* ceremony. At the same time, *andung* is performed at all levels of death as a form of respect for the deceased (Interview Sannur Sinaga, September 2023).

The conception (*ngarencana*) is when an art creator begins to make a design involving various aspects, especially regarding artistic and technical issues. Some of the essential things done are designing the form, determining aesthetic concepts, and designing the presentation pattern. At this stage, the creator conceptualizes the design of the work as outlined in the framework of the creation model. At this stage, the creator determines the title *Lungun*, a word that signifies sadness. *Lungun* is an expression of the composer's soul, a driving force to create a musical work that originates from the experience of sadness or the *andung* process. This *andung* process, the raw

material of music creation, will undergo a transformative journey, evolving into the creation of chamber music. The conceptual development of the tone, rhythm, meter, harmony, and timbre of the instruments is carefully crafted to express the intended atmosphere of sadness.

The Execution (*ngawangun*) is the stage where the creator's vision begins to take shape, a testament to their creativity and skill. Here, the creator pours their meticulously designed concepts and parts, making thoughtful additions and subtractions and ultimately finalizing the form of the artwork. In creating *Lungun* music, the composer determines the structure, instrumentation, and playing techniques. The musical structure consisted of three major sections entitled: (1) *mula-mula* (opening); (2) *andung* (lament song); (3) *poda* (message). The instrument-playing technique is based on the *pangandung's* expression of sadness, such as screaming, sobbing, crying, and wailing. Production (*ngebah*) is the final stage of creating a work of art, which is presenting the work to an audience. For the composer, *ngebah* is a critical moment to showcase the abilities achieved through the grueling artistic process. For the audience, *ngebah* is a time to enjoy the presentation of a new work of art, as well as the appearance of new performers. At this stage, *Lungun's* music will be performed at a chamber music concert.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION MUSICAL FORM

Musical form is the general concept of organization, structure, patterns, and less abstract ideas about process, function, and hierarchy in music (Caplin et al., 2009). Applying the concept of musical form to *Lungun*, we find a unique structure. *Lungun* comprises three distinct parts and is performed in a chamber music format. The musical form of *Lungun's* work is inspired by the structure of *Gondang Sabangunan* repertoire which consists of three main parts entitled: (1) *mula-mula* (opening) consisting of four subs: IA, IB, IC, ID; (2) *andung* (lament song); (3) *poda* (message). The instrumentation includes a variety of string instruments (violin, cello, contrabass), piano, *batak sulim*, oboe, *taganing*, five *andung* vocals, and *hesek*. What sets *Lungun* apart from other forms of music are its unique characteristics, such as (1) technique, (2) number and field patterns, (3) tonal system, and (4) notation writing.





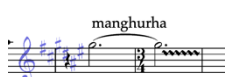
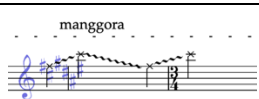
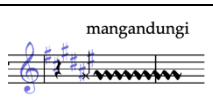
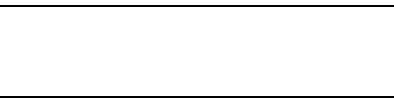


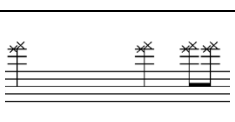
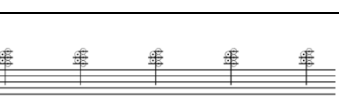

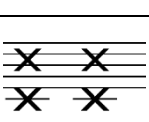
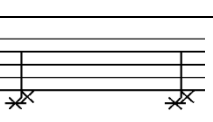
Technique

The techniques used in *Lungun* consist of (1) punches in the *Gondang Sabangunan* repertoire applied to strings, *taganing*, and *hesek*

instruments; (2) interpretation of crying sounds on the *sulim*, and (3) interpretation of *pangandung's* hand movements applied to the piano. The techniques are as follows: (1) *gondang mula-mula* technique, is a fast-moving solo *taganing* technique that hits the *painonga*, *paidua ting-ting*, and *ting-ting*; (2) *gondang somba* technique, is a *taganing* technique that features playing the *odap* and *odap-odap*; (3) *gondang mangaliat* technique, is a *taganing* technique that plays all the blades so that the resulting rhythm seems full; (4) *sulim manganaki* technique, which is a technique of blowing or tone ornamentation that prioritises finger speed and breath without using tongue techniques; (5) *sulim manghosai* technique, which is a technique that only uses breath and vibrato (vibration) with the tone slightly pulled up or down; (6) *sulim manghurha* technique, which is a technique of blowing with the use of a vibrating tongue; (7) *sulilm manggora* technique, which is a technique or ornament that resembles the sound of screaming; (8) *sulim mangandungi* technique, which is a *sulim* technique that imitates the sound of sobbing using vibrato breath tends to be heavier and a little given a beat; (9) *marsiulak hosa*

technique, which is a blowing technique with an unbroken breath; (10) piano string rubbing technique; (11) plucking piano strings; (12) hitting piano strings; (13) tapping the strings following the movement of the composer's hands; (14) rubbing one piano string upwards; (15) hitting the piano's outer frame; (16) hitting the piano's inner frame; (17) *ogung* playing techniques applied to strings instruments (violin, cello, contrabass)

Table 1. Technique description

Technique	Description
 <p>Taganing Gondang</p>	Interpretation of <i>gondang mula-mula</i> playing technique p= <i>painonga</i> pt= <i>paidua ting-ting</i> t= <i>ting-ting</i>
	Interpretation of <i>gondang somba</i> playing technique o= <i>odap-odap</i> oo= <i>odap=odap</i>
 <p>manganaki</p>	<i>Manganaki</i> technique on <i>batak sulim</i>
 <p>manghosai</p>	<i>Manghosai</i> technique on <i>batak sulim</i>
 <p>manghurha</p>	<i>Manghurha</i> technique on <i>batak sulim</i>
 <p>manggora</p>	<i>Manggora</i> technique on <i>batak sulim</i>
 <p>mangandungi</p>	<i>Mangandungi</i> technique on <i>batak sulim</i>
	<i>Marsiulak hosa</i> technique on <i>batak sulim</i>
	Piano string rubbing technique
	Plucking piano strings
	Hitting piano strings
	Tapping the strings following the movement of the composer's hands
	Rubbing one piano string upwards
	Hitting the piano's outer frame
	Hitting the piano's inner frame

	<p><i>Ogung</i> techniques on strings instruments</p>
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Number And Field Patterns

The number patterns in *Lungun's* works include: (1) number 3; (2) number 5; and (3) number 7. The patterns used are pitch intervals, beat, number of *pangandung*, melodic themes, rhythmic patterns, and musical structure. The determined pattern was inspired by the concept of numbers in the *Dalihan Na Tolu* philosophy, the Toba Batak levels of death, and the Toba Batak philosophy. Meanwhile, the field pattern applied to *Lungun's* work is to determine the players' position, which is circular. The formation of the performers in this work represents the concept of mourners in the tradition of the Toba Batak community. In addition, the position aims to provide a different auditory experience from the musician's side and the audience as the essence that wants to be produced from chamber music performances.

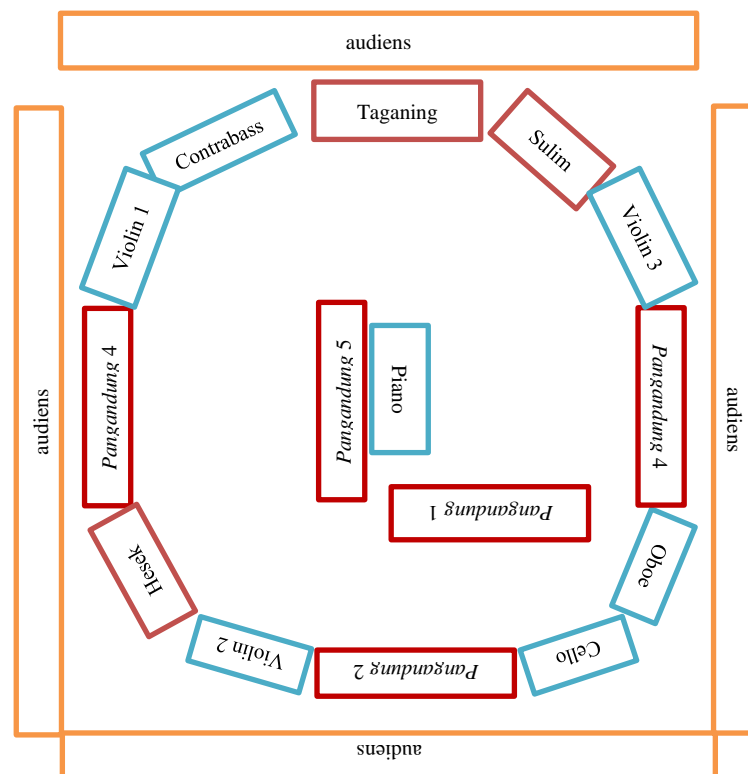


Figure 1. The players layout

Tone System and Notation Writing




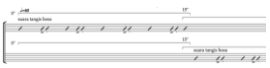



In *Lungun's* music, the melodic arrangement chosen was inspired by the tones in the *andung* chants and *gondang sabangunan* play, which consists of five tones: *nang*, *ning*, *nung*, *neng*, and *nong*. In Western music terms, it resembles the pentatonic scale of do, re, mi, fa, and sol (Ritonga, 2017, p. 150) with the base note F.

According to Sihite, there are five types of melodic contours found in *andung*, namely: repetitive melody, iterative melody, reverting melody, strophic melody, and progressive melody (2020, p. 465). In the vocal processing of *andung*, these five types of melodic forms are applied to *Lungun's* music: (1) repetitive, the use of Toba Batak pentatonic tones (*nang-ning-nung-neng-nong*) assembled into a melodic fabric sung repeatedly; (2) iterative, a singing pattern that uses a small melodic formula with a tendency to repeat in the whole song that uses three tones (tritone); (3) reverting, a singing pattern that occurs in the repetition of the first phrase after a melodic deviation. Common is the use of two tones (do and sol); (3) strophic, a singing pattern in which the melodic repetition remains the same, but the

song text is new; and (5) progressive, a singing pattern that keeps changing by using new melodic material following the number of sentences sung.

In addition, Mixolydian tone modes are used for the F tone and Aeolian for the G tone as a bridge to next phrase of the melody. The tone writing is written into a musical score using block and graphic notation according to the composer's interpretation. At the same time, the length is calculated based on the calculation of bars, seconds, and minutes.

Table 2. Tone system and notation writing description

Technique	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Nang</i> = do (F) • <i>Ning</i> = re (G) • <i>Nung</i> = mi (A) • <i>Neng</i> = fa (Bb) • <i>Nong</i> = sol (C)
	Mixolydian tone modes
	Aeolian tone modes
	Graphic notation symbolizing the <i>pangandung's</i> crying and time duration symbols
	Graphic notation symbolizing the <i>pangandung's</i> spoken
	Graphic notation symbolizing the <i>pangandung's</i> screaming
	Graphic notation symbolizing the <i>pangandung's</i> grief

MEANING

The creator uses semiotic theory as a scalpel to search for the meaning of *Lungun's* music. Semiotics is a science or method of analysis used to study signs. Semiotics is music as a system of meaningful signs. Within the semiotic system, there are three main structural aspects: (1) expression is something defined as a musical surface, in a notated score or an audible sound; (2) signification is the process of analyzing the relation of expression and content; (3) content is the term or naming of a set of expressions (Mazzola et al., 2016, p. 61). Referring to Mazzola's semiotic theory, the analysis of the meaning of *Lungun's* music is divided into three layers. The first layer is expression, the second is signification, and the third is content. The meaning is symbolized through numbers closely related to people's daily lives because they contain philosophical values of life and the philosophy of Toba Batak life, which is the principle of community life, both in carrying out traditional rituals and socializing.

The meaning of the numbers in question is as follows.

Dalihan Na Tolu







The profound significance of the number 3 in *Dalihan Na Tolu* is a testament to the rich cultural tapestry of the Batak community. According to Harahap, *Dalihan Na Tolu* serves as the three pillars of life support, intricately regulating the kinship system and patterns of relationships in the daily lives of the Batak people. This cultural concept weaves a complex web of connections between the Batak community, God, neighbors, and nature. In the social fabric of society, *Dalihan Na Tolu* governs the kinship system by delineating the position of the Batak community into three distinct parts, namely *hula-hula* (male family on the mother's/wife's side), *dongan sabutuha* (family friends), and *boru* (daughters), which together form a cohesive unit in customs and daily social life (1987, p. 34).



Figure 2. *Dalihan Na Tolu* Concept

In *Lungun's* music, the *Dalihan Na Tolu* principle is applied as a basic pattern of tone interval, rhythm, melody, beat, stroke technique, and musical structure that becomes unified.

Table 3. the application of *Dalihan Na Tolu* technique in Lungun's music






Expression	Signification	Content
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From note F, move up to note C with a note value 1/16. - From note A, move up to note C with a note value 1/16. - 3rd note interval 	Means the sound of people calling, which is called the <i>manggora</i> technique
	Time signature for part IA-IB	Implementation of <i>Dalihan Na Tolu</i> as fundamental beat
	3 division instruments (<i>batak sulim</i> , strings, <i>taganing</i> and <i>hesek</i>)	Implementation of <i>Dalihan Na Tolu</i> as an instrument grouping principle
	The rhythm plays of two <i>taganing</i> players and one <i>hesek</i> player.	Implementation of <i>Dalihan Na Tolu</i> as the basis of rhythm patterns
	Use of tritone (3 tones): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - G-A-C - G-A-Bb - F-G-A 	Implementation of <i>Dalihan Na Tolu</i> as melody archetype
	Use of blowing techniques (oboe) and rhythm strokes (<i>taganing</i> and <i>hesek</i>) three times	Implementation of <i>Dalihan Na Tolu</i> as the final marker of Lungun's work (in verbal language closed with the word <i>horas</i>)

Five Levels of Death of the Toba Batak

The number 5 implies the meaning of the Toba Batak levels of death, namely: (1) *Mate Saur Matua* (the person who died had grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and all children were married), (2) *Mate Sari Matua* (the person who died had grandchildren but there were still children who were not married), (3) *Mate Hatungganeon* (the person who died when he did not have grandchildren but his children were married), (4) *Mate Mangkar* (the person who died his children were still small or not married), (5) *Mate Diparalang-alangan* (the person who died after marriage but did not have children).

The five death levels inspired the composer to conceptualize the composition of *Lungun* music: (1) using 5 Toba Batak tones; (2) the use of 5/8 rhythm; (3) the use of Mixolydian mode; (4) the use of 5 *sulim* techniques; (5) the number of *andung* verses; (6) the number of *pangandung*; (7) the polymeter technique of *taganing* and *hesek* instruments in section III (*poda*).

Table 4. the application of five levels of the Toba Batak technique in Lungun's music

Expression	Signification	Content
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From note F, move up to note C with a note value 1/16. - 5th note interval 	<p>Means the sound of people calling, which is called the <i>manggora</i> technique</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Nang</i> (<i>mate diparalang-alangan</i>) = do (F) - <i>Ning</i> (<i>mate mangkar</i>) = re (G) - <i>Nung</i> (<i>mate hatungganeon</i>) = mi (A) - <i>Neng</i> (<i>mate sari matua</i>) = fa (Bb) - <i>Nong</i> (<i>mate saur matua</i>) = sol (C) 	<p>Implementation of 5 death level as a basic melodic scale system</p>
	<p>ID Section</p>	<p>Implementation of 5 levels of death as a symbol of the signature and beat archetype.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mixolydian modes of the F and G keys: C-D#-Bb-A D-D#-D-G 	<p>Implementation of 5 levels of death as a bridge to a new melodic phrase</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Manganaki</i>: 1st level of death (<i>mate saur matua</i>) - <i>Manghosai</i>: 2nd level of death (<i>mate sari matua</i>) - <i>Mangora</i>: 3rd level of death (<i>mate hatungganeon</i>) - <i>Manghurha</i>: 4th level of death (<i>mate mangkar</i>) - <i>Mangandungi</i>: 5th level of death (<i>mate diparalang-alangan</i>) 	<p>Implementation of the 5 levels of death as a <i>sulim</i> playing technique</p>

Seven Batak Philosophy

According to (Tinambunan, 2010), In the Toba Batak tradition, there are seven philosophies guide people's lives carried out in everyday life, including (1) *Mardebata* (believing in God), (2) *Marpinompar* (having descendants), (3) *Martutur* (having kinship), (4) *Maradat* (having customs), (5) *Marpangkirimon* (having hope), (6) *Marpatik* (having rules), (7) *Maruhum* (having laws). In *Lungun* music, the seven values of Toba Batak philosophy are implemented to (1) determine the number of players in section II (*andung*); (2) the number of stanzas in section IIA (*parsonduk bolon*), the number of piano playing techniques in section II (*andung*); (3) the beat symbol in section III (*poda*); (4) 7 motifs of melodic themes in section III (*poda*); (5) the technique of isorhythm patterns on the *odap* and *odap-odap*; (6) as well as the polyrhythms and polymeter playing of *taganing* and *hesek* instruments in section III (*poda*).

CONCLUSION

Lungun is a neo-classical chamber music piece inspired by the *andung* tradition of the Toba Batak death ritual. The creation of *Lungun* is based on the empirical experience of the composer and

because of the anxiety about the existence of *andung*, which is rarely performed today. Two things are commonly performed in the *andung* tradition: *andung* vocal singing and *Gondang Sabangunan* music presentation. In the creation of the musical work *Lungun*, the elements of *andung* vocal singing and the *Gondang Sabangunan* structure are used as basic ideas poured into a framework or creation model that discusses the form and meaning. *Lungun* is a three-part musical structure. Part I (*mula-mula*) is the opening instrumental music, part II (*andung*) is the *andung* singing, and part III (*poda*) is the closing instrumental music that is performed in a chamber music performance. The instrumentation consists of stringed instruments (violin 1, violin 2, violin 3, cello, contrabass), *batak sulim*, oboe, five *pangandung*, piano, *hesek*, and *taganing*. The musical elements used include the Toba Batak scales (*nang, ning, nung, neng, nong*), *Gondang Sabangunan's* repertoire technique, interpretation of crying sounds, and interpretation of *pangandung's* hand movements, which are processed into a technique, number, and field patterns, tonal system, and notation writing. The meanings contained in *Lungun* music include symbolic meanings symbolized through numbers in the Toba Batak community, namely the number 3 representing the *Dalihan Na Tolu*

philosophy, the number 5 representing the level of death of the Toba Batak custom, and the number 7 representing the Toba Batak philosophy.

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List of Resource Persons/Informants

- Sinaga, Sannur Dame Friska (51 years), Music Teacher/Batak Artist, interview on 24 September 2023 on Zoom.
- Sinaga, Lamro Parulian (20 years old), Batak Artist, interview on 20 February 2024 in Denpasar, Bali.