



PROCEEDINGS OF THE 4th INTERNATIONAL MUSIC & PERFORMING ARTS CONFERENCE

Trending Digital Virtual and Capital

EDITORS

HAFZAN ZANNIE HAMZA
CLARE SUET CHING CHAN
LENA FARIDA HUSSAIN CHIN





Proceedings of the 4th International Music & Performing Arts Conference: Trending Digital, Virtual and Capital

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Hafzan Zannie Hamza
Clare Suet Ching Chan
Lena Farida Hussain Chin

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Diterbitkan di Malaysia oleh / *Published in Malaysia by*
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
35900 Tanjong Malim, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia. Tel : 05-4506000, Faks : 05-4595169
Laman Sesawang : www.upsi.edu.my E-mel : penerbit@upsi.edu.my

Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia Data Pengkatalogan-dalam-Penerbitan /
Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

International Music & Performing Arts Conference (4th : 2022 : Perak)
Proceedings of the 4th International Music & Performing Arts Conference:
Trending Digital Virtual And Capital, 14-16 DECEMBER 2022, PERAK / Editors
Hafzan Zannie Hamza, Clare Suet Ching Chan, Lena Farida Hussain Chin.
Mode of access: Internet
eISBN 978-967-0050-96-6
1. Music--Congresses.
2. Performing arts--Congresses.
3. Government publications--Malaysia.
4. Electronic books.
I. Hafzan Zannie Hamza. II. Suet, Clare Ching Chan.
III. Lena Farida Hussain Chin. IV. Title.
780

The 4th International Music & Performing Arts Conference is organized by the
Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

in collaboration with

College of Music, University of the Philippines Diliman
Music Department, Faculty of Ecology, University Putra Malaysia
Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Denpasar

Organizational & Program Committee

Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris

Editors

Hafzan Zannie Hamza
Clare Suet Ching Chan
Lena Farida Hussain Chin

Copy Editors

Aiman Ikram Uyub
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Cite this proceedings: Hamza, H. Z., Chan, C. S. C., & Hussain Chin, L. F. (Eds.). (2022). *Proceedings of the 4th international music & performing arts conference: Trending digital, virtual and capital*. Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Proceedings of the 4th International Music & Performing Arts Conference is the product of efforts made by paper presenters/authors from the conference.

We thank all of them for their contributions.

We wish to acknowledge the following institutions for their collaborative assistance in making the 4th International Music & Performing Arts Conference a success.

College of Music, University of the Philippines Diliman
Music Department, Faculty of Ecology, University Putra Malaysia
Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Denpasar

Terima kasih

Conference Chair | Clare Suet Ching Chan
Conference Co-Chair | Lena Farida Hussain Chin

CONFERENCE THEMES

TRENDING DIGITAL, VIRTUAL AND CAPITAL

Performing Arts in Covid Era

Performing Arts industry plays an important role in the economy and society—wellbeing, employment, sustainable development, tourism, and education. The global pandemic, Covid-19, has had tremendous effects on the Performing Arts grouped under the Cultural and Creative Industries. This theme explores how the Performing Arts sector is surviving the pandemic. How have musicians, producers, performances, and educators responded to the Covid-19 pandemic through performance and education? How do performers continue to practice and sustain their performance skills? What kind of creative work are composers, choreographers, thespians and producers producing during this time? How is the performing arts industry promoting and marketing performances? How do performing artists generate income during the pandemic? What are the teaching methods and approaches? What software, applications, and technological tools have been developed and utilized to engage online learners? How do educators deal with issues of online attention span; online connectivity; touch, sound, and movement during online teaching?

“Creative” Sustainability of Traditional Performing Arts

Traditional performing arts embody the evolving ideas of a group of people influenced by various forms of cultural contact-conquest, migration, colonization, assimilation, integration, and appropriation. Traditional performing arts consist of vast bodies of knowledge, skills, repertoire and techniques with their own value and aesthetics. Many of these traditional forms are less practiced today due to their detachment from a system of beliefs or an ecological niche. Many traditional forms of performance are also losing their appeal from competition with the capitalistic performing arts industry. How can musicians, composers, theatre practitioners, dancers and educators stimulate interest in traditional performing arts? Some traditional performing arts are being given new life through new approaches in education, production, and advocacy. What are the creative ideas utilized to capture and attract the online audiences? How can traditional performing arts be made relevant and interesting to the current generation? What are the critiques, problems, and issues with the approaches used? How have new belief systems, nationalistic propaganda, tourism, and “spectacle” influenced the cultural meaning and value the traditional performing arts? Who has the authority to change, accept, and approve these performances? How do these performances influence and affect consumer understanding and perception of the traditional performing arts?

Performing Arts Industries

The industrial revolution has changed the ways that humans create, consume, participate in, and listen to music, dance, and theatre. Some traditional performing arts have moved away from “traditional” religious, recreational, and therapeutic functions and are now often viewed as a commodity created by the recording, film, theatre, dance, and music industry. A work of art is now valued and measured by its ability to generate income or “likes.” The introduction of technology beginning with the emergence of electronic music led to infinite possibilities in sound and timbre production, creating new musical aesthetics such as mixing, EQing, phrasing, beatmatching and prep. Today, technology in the performing arts productions has expanded to the use of Augmented Reality, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality. Individuals and groups can now market their performing arts productions through social media—Spotify, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and others. What happens to the performance of music, dance, and theatre when much of its production is focused on commoditization rather than inspiration; spectacle rather than function; entertainment rather than recreation? How does this affect the social psychology of the producers and consumers?

Diversifying Research Methodologies in the Performing Arts

In recent decades, performing arts researchers have been exploring new research methodologies to examine their own practices and creative works of arts. Approaches such as practice-led, practiced-based, artistic-led and a/r/tography have emerged. Performing artists are now integrating quantitative methodologies including surveys and experimental studies; with qualitative methods such as ethnography, case studies. Composers have collaborated with scientists to understand how musical sounds can affect the brain, facilitating music therapy research. Performers are collaborating with composers in understanding the limits and extent of the instrumentation that the composers would like to explore in their research. Performers are interviewing composers or examining historical documents from worldwide online resources now available for a refreshed understanding of existing repertoires.

Virtual Performances

Virtual performances have revolutionized the creation and experience of performance. Composers, performers, dancer, theatre practitioners, and educators are challenged to create innovative ways to engage their virtual audience. Some events have utilized custom avatars, curated tracks, leaderboard challenges, prized games, award badges, virtual photo booths and prizes for those who stay till the end to attract audiences to remain engaged. How is scenography and lighting recreated; multiple camera angles, evolving virtual 3D backgrounds and random pop-ups advertisements introduced to create effects and affect moods? What are the methods, techniques and skills utilized to capture the attention of a virtual audience? How do these virtual performances affect the consumer’s experience of performance? How does watching from home and creating your own viewing setting and ambience create the performance experience?

Performing Gender

The gendering of sexed bodies is a process that shifts as people define themselves in particular cultural webs of local, national, and transnational ideologies. Performance contributes to cultural processes through which the boundaries of gender and sex are negotiated, constructed, and performed. The boundaries of gender and sex are cultural concepts and informed by ideologies that influence how gendered individuals should look, sound, move, behave, and dress. How are the boundaries of gender and sex being defined, redefined, or challenged through performance and the performing arts? Does the hyper real environment of virtual performance allow for explorations of gender identity not bound to physical bodies? How might gender and its definition affect the physical spaces of performance?

Western Classical Music Online Performances During the Covid-19 Pandemic: Challenges and Opportunities

Dahlia Nazir Neniél¹, Murina Pawanteh², Mohamad Zaki Samsudin³
University of Wollongong Malaysia KDU Malaysia
e-mail: 0132164@kdu-online.com¹, pmurina@uow.edu.my², zaki.s@uow.edu.my³

Abstract

Western Classical Music has a long-standing tradition of delivering powerful live performances in big concert halls and arenas. Performing in these live events is arguably the goal and dream of every Classical Music artists. However, when the Covid-19 pandemic began in early 2020, musical artists all over the world were forced to shift from performing live in physical venues in front of physical audiences to performing online with virtual collaborators and audiences. This study explores how Western Classical Musicians were able to successfully adapt to this unique and novel challenge from the point-of-view and perspective of these artists themselves. Seven musical artists in Malaysia and Singapore were interviewed to explore how they had successfully navigated the challenges in planning and holding online performances. In addition to the obvious technical and logistic challenges, a few unique social-cultural issues were also highlighted during the interviews. In the end, some views were also shared on how the pandemic had opened new opportunities for Western Classical Musicians to promote and encourage others to appreciate and learn Western Classical Music. Thus, Western Classical Music in general can continue to strive in the future, not just with the return to physical live performances, but a continuation of online live performances to reach out to a more diverse range of fans and audiences.

Keywords: musical artists, online performances, western classical music

Introduction and Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected many industries globally, and the arts is one of the many industries that was hit the hardest. The impact of the pandemic, with its lockdown and social distancing protocols, affected the artists' abilities to interact with one another and audience members face-to-face (Loveridge, 2020). Musicians, in particular, were forced to move onto a virtual platform as a means to continue their musical creations (Loveridge, 2020). Artists and musicians from the likes of Pop, Rock, Indie, and R&B genres found no difficulty in music-making, composing as well as producing as they were able to quickly build recording studios in their own homes and utilise technologies meant for such tasks (Baby, 2021). For Western Classical musicians, however, found themselves stranded at the beginning of 2020, not know what the future holds for them and how would they be able to continue performing (Cahill, 2020).

Western Classical Music has a long-standing tradition of being performed in person to live audiences in decadent locations such as the Royal Albert Concert Hall in London, United Kingdom, the Sydney Opera House in Sydney, Australia, and the Petronas Philharmonic Hall in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. While there have been minor assimilations of technology and Western Classical Music, such as the use of digital library where all past performances are kept in as archival and the use of tablets or iPads over traditional scores (Fonseca-Wollheim, 2016; Goertz, 2008), it has maintained the physical aspect of both performers and audiences.

Music, in general, has always been viewed as a universal language; it communicates intentions, feelings, and has the ability to induce powerful emotions that results in physical and behavioral effects (Hargreaves et al., 2005). In his research involving the use of Brunswick's functionalist approach and emotional communication within music performance, Patrik Juslin (1997) regarded music as a non-verbal communication and includes the presence of basic emotions with non-verbal communication, and thus implying a communication process that is compliant with Shannon and Weaver's (1949) communication model. However, Philip Tagg (2013) rejected the notion and stated that "it is misleading to say that music is a universal language as it would be to claim that language is a universal music" (p. 48).

Research involving musical communication can be found as far back as 1978, where a performer's ability to communicate dynamics, such as diminuendo and crescendo, was investigated. Past research concluded that the performer's intentions could be shared across various dynamics (Nakamura, 1978, as cited in Kendall & Carterette, 1990). For example, *forte* is often characterised as happy or exciting. In contrast, *piano* is described as melancholy or relaxed; the difference in either would lie within the key of the piece. For example, a minor key often exudes sadness or darkness, whereas a major key exudes cheerfulness and joy.

For music, whatever genre it may be, to be created and coherently heard, performers must coordinate and communicate with one another by synchronously listening to themselves as well as others (Goodman, 2002). A musical ensemble is a unique social group whose mode of interaction requires a level of intimacy and subtlety that no other type of group can resemble (Goodman, 2002). Ensemble performance is about collaboration. The social factors in an ensemble performance refers to the leadership styles within the ensemble, and the social stereotyping attached to each instrument. Young and Coleman (1979) viewed a string quartet as an excellent example of a homogenous and cohesive group since they are able to perform entirely different, though complementary, roles (as cited in Blank & Davidson, 2007).

Musicians are experts in social interaction, which includes real-time nonverbal communication. Individuals within a group-level musical coordination may be thought of as processing units embedded within a complex system, engaged in joint actions, and sharing technical, aesthetic, and emotional goals (Volpe et al., 2016). In line with Young and Coleman's (1979) opinion, Volpe (2016) noted that the string quartet is one of the most significant chamber ensembles, which is evident in the numerous compositions meant for string quartets as well as many prior research devoted in analysing string quartets.

It can be argued that technology and Western Classical music has been long intertwined with one another in many ways. However, it is within the past two decades

that the ‘digital revolution’ had impacted the perception of time, space, knowledge, and sound, all factors that condition approaches to music; to talk about the interface between Western Classical music and technology today, is to talk about the interface between Western Classical Music and the digital culture (Bayle & Provenzano, 2021). According to Bayle and Provenzano (2021), although it may seem as though the Western Classical Music allows itself to be absent from issues raised by new technologies, it is the Western Classical Music community that responds to it, one way or another.

Statement of Problem

There is limited research done on musical communication and Western Classical Music performances executed on virtual stages. Past research such as Williamon and Davidson (2002), Blank and Davidson (2007), and Kawase (2014) studied musical communication in its physical form, between performer to performer, and between performer to audience. On the other hand, Iorwerth and Knox’s (2019) study investigated musical communication in a virtual space by adapting networked music performance technologies and placing the performers in separate rooms and providing them with a link for audio and video connection. In this research, two research questions were brought forward:

1. How did the Western Classical Music artists adapt to the challenges of performing online?
2. What are the opportunities for Western Classical Music artists to promote online Western Classical performance in the same manner as live performance?

Research Objectives

This study explores how Western Classical Music communicates through a virtual stage. More specifically, the objectives of this study are:

1. to investigate if Western Classical Music artists are able to adapt to the challenges, and
2. to determine if, at all, there are opportunities for Western Classical Music artists to promote Western Classical performance in the same manner as live performance.

Theoretical Framework

This research had adopted the performance theory, semiotic theory, and musical communication. All three theories culminated into Philip Tagg’s (2013) musical communication model within a socio-cultural framework. In order to fully understand the concept of musical communication through the use of technology for online performance, it is crucial to review the research involving performance theory,

semiotic theory, and musical communication. According to Charlotte Kroløkke, performance theories strive to comprehend how humans create culture by examining communication as a performance (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Linguistic and communication approaches to performance theories evolved from semiotics, most notably Ferdinand de Saussure's semiology and Roman Jakobson's concentration on deconstructing any speech event into its component parts. However, for the purpose of this research, Charles Peirce's definition of semiotics was used in relation to Tagg's framework. Peirce defined semiotics based on the process of semiosis, which is the system of signs (Nöth, 2014; Tagg, 2013). Peirce's model takes semiosis in its simplest form, which is the process of meaning being produced and understood (Tagg, 2013). In regard to this research, Peirce's semiotic theory fits the concept of musical communication as music, at its most basic form, is a collection of signs, and each notation is seen as a symbol.

Tagg's framework suggests that communication occurs in a single direction, making it a one-way process, and the receiver does not entirely affect the message except by way of interpretation through the 'store of symbols' and 'socio-cultural norms' (Inskip et al., 2008). The 'store of symbols,' according to Tagg (2013), is a part of the 'socio-cultural norms' as it "contains all the social conventions of what constitutes music in the relevant culture" (Tagg, 2013, p. 174).

Methodology

This study's research method is that of qualitative method, which consists of an interview approach. This approach is believed to be suitable for collecting data on verbal and non-verbal communication within Western Classical Music taking place on a virtual stage as it provides an opportunity for a detailed investigation of each person's perspective, personal context, and a detailed coverage of the topic. This research, albeit done digitally, was conducted mainly in Malaysia, as well as Singapore. Respondents to this research consisted of Malaysian and Singaporean nationalities and were selected for this research based on their experiences and standing in the Western Classical Music industry. The use of Zoom was used in conducting the interview, and each interview session was recorded.

Summary of Findings

All seven respondents had expressed varying opinions on certain aspects of online Western Classical Music performances, but also shared similar opinions on other aspects. Most respondents expressed that having Western Classical Music online was a positive situation and it acts as a means of sustaining the art form, particularly with the overall growth of the music industry and technology. Though the industry as a whole was thrown onto virtual stages and forced to performing online, it gave the performers an opportunity to extend their reach beyond physical limitations and introduced both the music and the musicians to a much larger audience member. Others viewed it as a silver-lining to the global predicament. One respondent stated that it was not ideal to execute an online performance given the fact that good

technology, such as camera and internet, were not things that were readily available to some individuals. Therefore, some sacrifices were made in order to be able to perform online.

All respondents agreed that the lack of interaction from audience members made performing feel different. One respondent stated that interaction with audience members does not mean a literal interaction whereby performer and audience have a conversation but rather the presence of the audience member during the performance, and that itself affects the outcome of the performance as a whole as some performers rely on the audience member for feedback on the performance. Another respondent elaborated that as a performer, seeing the audience in-person gives energy and motivation to perform a certain way. Without the presence of the audience, it feels rather like a recording session for an audition or other times, simply a rehearsal.

Despite the challenges of online performances, some respondents voiced that having an online performance gave the opportunity to create a digital archive of performances. One respondent elaborated on how the Berlin Philharmonic were among the first few orchestras in the world to create a digital archive of all their performances. Moreover, another respondent said that having online performances provided marketing opportunities for when physical performances were allowed once more. One respondent stated that they had taken the lockdown as an opportunity to explore and experiment with various streaming platforms such as Twitch, Instagram Live, and also YouTube.

Conclusion

The global pandemic acted as a catapult for many industries that relied on physical spaces to adopt and use virtual spaces. The Western Classical Music industry was in a temporary turmoil filled with uncertainty of when musicians would be able to return to physical performances. However, based on this research, it is clear that the Western Classical Music industry was able to retain and sustain its presence through the use of technology and online performances. The musicians were able to adapt themselves to the challenges of online performances by finding alternative methods and exploring beyond their safety nets. Moreover, it provided the opportunity to market both Western Classical Music and the performers within their location and beyond, acting as a digital bibliography for the musicians and a larger digital archive for Western Classical Music as a whole for a variety to interpretation and variation of pieces.

Discussion

In view of the conclusion above, the following are some recommendations towards future challenges and opportunities to Western Classical Music performed online.

1. A better system of education should be put into place as a means of introducing, educating, and sustaining the arts.
2. Existing Western Classical artists should begin to incorporate technology as part of a routine when executing any musical activities.

3. The Western Classical Music industry should view the presence of technology during performances such as livestream as part of the normal concert programme.

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Virtual and Real-Life Experience of Site-Specific Performance according to Emotion and Sense of Presence

Roselina Khir¹, Murina Pawanteh², Nawfal Zamri³,
Rithaudin Abdul Kadir⁴ and John Stephen Moses⁵

University of Wollongong Malaysia KDU Malaysia

e-mail: roseline.k@kdu.edu.my¹, pmurina@uow.edu.my², zamrinawfal@gmail.com³,
djgi77@yahoo.com⁴, john.m@uow.edu.my⁵

Abstract

Historically, theatre is performed by an actor in a special place or enclosure that is shared with the onlooker or audience. Emotion and the sense of presence have always been key factors in a theatre performance. However, for most of the Covid 19 pandemic, virtual plays have been a replacement of real theatrical performance. And now, although standard operating procedures had been lax, people had found it to be quite convenient to carry on watching performances virtually. However, the research question for this study is can the level of presence and emotion which are dependent on actor-space and actor-spectator or actor-actor relationships be achieved in a virtual performance? This study focuses on Site-Specific performances which are carried out live at site and online. The objective is to compare responses, emotion and sense of presence of site-specific performances which occur in real places within the space of the community with that of a virtual experience. The assumption is that in a site-specific performance, the spectators just have to be present in the place rather than looking at it as pure image. Questionnaires adapted from Witmer and Singer (1998) will be distributed to spectators at site and also viewers online. The findings will show whether spectators in a real environment show higher level of presence and emotion responses compared to those in a virtual environment or could there be not much difference.

Keywords: site-specific performance, virtual performance, virtual experience.

Introduction

This is a preliminary study on site-specific performance in Malaysia. Site performances interest had grown in recent times; they had been included in festivals organised within the country and out, and there had been international exchanges to Australia, Indonesia, and Germany. The questions that come about besides who are producing site-specific performance in the country are; (a) who sees it? (b) where do these performances take place? (c) why are the site-specific mode chosen? and (d) are they all defined the same way? To this issue, the study added further research into practices and responses towards virtual on-site performances.

Background

This study focuses on Site-Specific performances which were recently observed live at site and online, virtually. The specific sites of the dances were offered within the context of the Melaka Arts and Performances Festival 22 (MAP Fest 22) organised by a passionate individual. The MAP Fest 22 focused towards the experience of how people transformed out of the Pandemic 2020 & 2021 with the theme ‘Traces of Transformation.’ The organiser could not get a permit to have the festival in a public place or historical site of Malacca, hence they were held at a private-run bar, the Baboon Club and the other at an abandoned Warehouse along the meandering Melaka River. The sites were selected because the organiser did not have to apply for permit from the State Authorities. Previous venues for site-specific performances had even included rural locations like a paddy field and along the hills in Kedah, churches, derelict urban locations, in a Sea-side Resort, in a retail shopping mall and others.

The study also focuses on the site performance that was part of the recent MAP Fest 22 and live streamed from a hall of an Arts School in Sandakan Sabah. Online site performances had been active during the Movement Control Order since 2020 up to 2021 in the country and in collaboration with other countries. MAP Fest was held yearly in 2020 and 2021, and The Bandung Arts Festival in 2020 and 2021. The *Riuh* Show was live streamed through Instagram which had 640 viewers and via YouTube with 3,563 viewers to date. There was Dancing in Place which involved six cities as FB Live Performance and Choreo-Instant with the Theme Stay at Home involving 42 International artists as a tribute to World Dance Day 2020.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to investigate the responses of site-specific performances which were presented in real places within the space of the community and with that of a virtual experience. Emotion and the sense of presence have always been key factors in a theatre performance, hence, the researchers wanted to find out the experiences among audience at a site-performance in terms of presence, and emotion within the context of site-specific dance. Presence would be discussed in relation to how the symbolic significance of the body of the dancer—of the effort, posture, the movement, and gesture comes across to the audience. What tools are used to construct a performance of place?

Research question:

1. What are the experiences in terms of emotion and presence of specific art performance among those who watch it in virtual and physical environments?

The subjects within this study are in two types of environments—the virtual as compared to the physical. The performer performing within a physical environment is fully present live in front of spectators. Whereas a virtual performer depends a lot on the technological feature. The assumption is that the concept of presence in a

virtual environment and with respect to real world experiences would be different.

Literature Review

Site-Specific Performances

Historically theatre is performed by an actor or actors in a special place or enclosure that is shared with the onlookers. Its roots lie in traditional rituals of ancient civilisations. It usually involves portrayal and performance, a performance space, and performers (Barranger, 2015). It often includes the use of masks or makeup, costumes, dance, and music.

The modern man then gets used to watch performances in a specifically designed theatre building with lights and defined space we call stage. However, the 1960's saw more development when performances are taken outside theatre buildings. Schechner (2003) puts it that the theatre of plays is moving past prosceniums and seated audiences into audience-inclusion and environmental staging (p. 162). Schechner (1977) termed it as environmental theatre, a shared community of performance and spectators. Allan Kaprow (1983) called it the 'happenings' where there is the context, the place of conception and the enactment.

“The most intense of essential Happenings have been spawned in old lofts, basements, vacant stores, natural surroundings and the street—where very small audiences or groups of visitors are co-mingled in some way with the event” (pp. 16-17).

These experimental performances of Allan Kaprow's happenings and environmental arts were said to be the origins of contemporary site-specific performance.

Kaye (2000) identified the origins of site-specificity to the minimalism movement of the 60's, a move from designated artistic places like theatres into the realm of everyday life in the act of making intervention.

The label 'site-specific' is applied to an ever-increasing number of performance and art practices with dramatically different subject matter, audience experience and intentions—there had been restaging of Shakespeare in a forest, a guided coach tour, an endurance walk and many others (Kwon, 1997).

Pearson (2010) uses the term 'site-specific' performance to cover performance work that transpires from and is determined by the site in which it happens. He argues that there is a two-way process between the practices and the sites. Thus, site-specificity can be defined in terms of the message it communicates between the performance and the place in which new relationship between performer and spectator can be explored. Pearson also notes there are many variations in terms of methods, practices, intentions, and aesthetic forms.

Spectators of Site-Performances

McAuley (1999) asserts that whereas the spectator's position within the theatre auditorium is closely associated with ticket price, and affordability, site-specific performance-makers usually encourage or let spectators to move, walk, or even participate in the performance. If site-performances are made specially out of the buildings, as street theatre, the accessibility to reach a wider audience or even people who are unfamiliar with theatre is a possibility. McAuley proposes two key conditions to define the boundaries of 'performance':

- The live presence of the performers and those witnessing it
- 'Intentionality' on the part of performer, witness or both. (pp. 31–32)

McAuley acknowledges that spectators of site-specific works are invited to construct meanings out of the perceived relationship between the performance and its site as it unfolds.

Role of Spectators

Kaye (2000) traces the development of site-specific performance throughout the twentieth century which included different genres and disciplines including architecture, happenings, body art, concept art, land art, and performance art, all of which combine to characterize site-specific art. But what was central to the discussion is the role of the spectator. Spectators must make sense of the experience of watching the performance. Are they just passive viewers? Or if they are there with the intention of watching, how do they make sense of the dialogue between the place of the performance and the work of art? It is very much self-reflexive and depends on the spectator's awareness. Kaye says that the text then becomes the frame in which 'the conceptual and performative contexts in which the idea of the work is defined' (p. 183). Wilkie (2008) suggests that there is something seductive for the spectator in the site-specific event itself. Whatever other stance it takes regarding its site, it functions as 'something different' for an audience who are used either to performance in a theatre building or to the site without the performative frame. In the case of site-specific works, the audience is invited to construct meanings out of the perceived relationship between the performance and its site as it unfolds. Thus site-specificity movement or dance performance could mean different things to different people.

Presence and Emotions

Presence in the form of suspension of disbelief, or as negotiation, and as the feeling of being there refer to an audience becoming emotionally invested in the story. That is an important element in any performances. To help achieve this effect, the choreographer/dancer or the storyteller must create a convincing story and as long as the story remains entertaining and internally consistent, the audience will eagerly accept it.

An artist engages with the spectators within the space. presence is the feeling of being there and that should involve an engagement of emotions. This is the

reception process at work in site-specific performance. Being present is being in proximity in space and being present in the here and now. So that implies a dynamic relationship between the two factors – the spectators and the performer through the dance or movement.

Rubidge (2011) suggest that dancers, do not merely create physical movements, they create virtual gestures, which extend beyond the materiality of their bodies. The virtual gestures become an extended actualisation of the intricate interplay of the trajectories and tensions that permeate the interrelations between dancers and the space within and through which they dance.

Choreographer Meredith Monk emphasises that, for site-specific work, she listens to what the space is saying to her (Kloetzel & Pavlik, 2009). According to the Dynamic Theory of Intentions presented by Pacherie (2006), when the subjects are present during agency – they will be able to successfully enact their intentions – they locate themselves in the physical and cultural space in which the action occurs. Therefore, this suggests that the physical presence would be different subject to how the artists enact their intentions within the environment. Thus, If the performer successfully enacts his or her intentions, they can induce presence.

The Virtual Site Performance

So here the question is, how would a site-specific performer make his presence felt on the virtual system? The artist in a virtual environment would have to work harder to create that presence on the virtual system which is the medium locating himself or herself in the physical or cultural space in which the action occurs. According to Witmer et al. (1998), the effectiveness of virtual environments has often been linked to the sense of presence reported by viewers of those virtual environment. It is the subjective experience of being in one place or environment, even when one is physically situated in another. Witmer et al. (1998) believe that presence is a normal awareness phenomenon that requires directed attention and is based in the interaction between sensory stimulation, environmental factors that encourage involvement of the viewers.

Zahoric and Jenison (1998) assert that in a site-performance, the environment the dancer performs in also plays a big role. The viewers must be made like they are present in the place, not just looking at the performance virtually.

Methodology

This study was done mainly through observation of the site performances at the Melaka Arts and Performances Festival 22 on the 26-28 August. Traces of Transformation was chosen as the theme of the MAP Fest – the focus being on the experiences of how artists transformed out of the pandemic of 2020 & 2021. MAP artists are independent artists from Indonesia, India, Australia, Japan, Canada and Malaysia. The sites chosen were based on availability and ease without local government protocols, so the organisers set it up at a bar in Jonker Street, the Baboon House and at Melaka Warehouse along the Malacca River. Besides this, observation was done on a virtual site performance via live stream from the school hall of the Arts

School in Sandakan.

Data was also collected through questionnaires distributed physically among the audiences during the three-day Fest and through Google-Form for the virtual performance. There were 30 attendees in Malacca where we managed to collect about 80% responses. However, although the virtual performance had 120 viewers, only 20 responded.

Discussion

From observation, this artists-led festival presented a diverse palate of creative works away from commercial market of art production. Artworks originated from the imagination of artists built from individual experiences and wealth from all cultures and life paths. They brought a strong message a love for art, irrespective of culture, beliefs and religious differences. That includes the virtual performance as well. Each artist had surveyed the premises beforehand and adapted their performances to the sites. A Malaysian seasoned site-specific performer when interviewed responded that he usually has a heightened sensitivity caused by being in a new environment.

Dancers' Feedback

"My experiences on performing on sites varies. I would say that my performance impacts on the place whether I can tell a variety of stories, or if I can resonate my past to resonate in the presence. That would unleash a dynamic meaning making process." Another performer interviewed added that:

"Site-based performance usually engages with its chosen site and as a result tends to be drawn into engagement with the social and political issues that seem a part of the place. However, since my performance was at the Baboon House, which is a bar which has no deep social issues, I chose to do a dance of my own struggle with my sexuality."

An Indonesian artist had chosen to present an improvisational work, inspired from the traditional *Main Peteri*, a traditional ceremony to cure a patient who is ill, at the open lounge of the bar Baboon house. This gave the opportunity for customers at the bar to witness a site performance.

An artist from India performed an acrobatic act which he terms as psycho – physical movement. For the performance at the disused site at the Warehouse along the bank of the Malacca River, the artist from Indonesia performed more of a solo cultural movement/dance which had no connection to the site nor to any historical meaning. He moved and mingled with the audiences seated around him to the entrancing music.

Another performance which was full of theatrics took up the theme of MAP Fest Traces of Transformation literally. He enacted the isolation of a Covid-19 phenomenon which ends in the struggle and death of the victim of Covid-19. Both these performances were interactive.

Overall, dance practitioners interviewed, said that they had used their own movement language from the sites in which they had to work. Practical considerations

were important because certain types of movement become impossible.

Spectators on Site

The spectators of the site performance in Malacca were made up of those who already knew each other and are themselves artists/performers. Twenty percent were new audiences, who came as interns in a Studio in Penang who were recording the event or friends of friends and a few walk-in customers of the Baboon Club. The reasons are that (a) there was not much publicity around it for the public itself and that (b) the sites chosen were in enclosed buildings, thus there was hardly new “found audience.” According to Malaysian Insight in 2021 (published on November 14) Jonker Walk has approximately 30,000 visitors on a single weekend. Visitors come for walking tours, shopping and food. Thus, these site performances would have been accessible, reaching to a wider audience perfect for creating new audiences.

A 16 years old spectator commented on a performance he witnessed at The Baboon House, a dance of the struggle of middle age and self-exploration. He was gay and all he wanted was love. His response:

“I feel that the artist was moving to his instincts and feelings at the moment. Another that witnessed was dancer in trance. Generally, all performances that I watched tonight do not have a story except once, two years ago, when all the artists came together to perform one large story.”

Another respondent said what he liked about a performance he witnessed:

“Where the dancer performed a dance which he felt pertained to some spirituality, derived or influenced from the natives. He did it at the lobby of the pub with incense and I felt the spirituality.”

One respondent felt that the artists he saw had expressed themselves via performance—they wanted freedom, they are intense and showed vulnerability of oneself. He empathised with the character/dancer.

“A dancer danced naked to depict his vulnerability and his fear. I don’t feel there is a message, but it conveys more of emotions and feelings. He showed fear and animalistic instincts.”

A respondent describes her experience of watching the performance. She describes them as modern art, a new wave:

“There was a lot of emotions I felt like rage, rebellion against man’s laws, there was a dance of joy and intensity, and one dance had expressed fear and wanting to be accepted. To be loved.”

A 73 -year- old woman liked the spiritual, animal-like effect of a dance by an artist from India who incorporated tiger-like movements of an Indian cultural dance. Another respondent claims overall, she gathered a mixed-emotions of calmness,

intrigue, sad, happy, desperateness-common emotions people feel. It's the struggle in everyone's life through the performances. One respondent observed that:

“Space and time become separated. The here and now between audience and artist. And some performances made one feel and experience that can't be expressed through words. Although one dance probably lasted less than five minutes, he managed to isolate the time and his emotions through the movements made me feel as though it lasted hours.”

Respondents commented on the sites selected:

1. It is industrial and strong (the warehouse). Beautiful exploration for the artists to represent themselves in a purist form.
2. The site at Baboon House is unique as the café runs per usual while the performance is on.
3. The artists used whatever the site had to offer. The space.
4. One artist performed it in a hallway with perfect lighting which connected it to past heritage and culture

However, most respondents reflected that most times the feelings died abruptly or in anti-climax as their emotions and focus are cut off during the transitions in between one dance to the other.

Spectators Online

The site-performance held virtually and live-streamed from the Arts School in Sandakan met with the problem of rain. The choreographer/lecturer of students involved had planned to do the performance on open ground, with a few choices for the sites, but the rain had hampered the plans. Hence, they had it in the school hall which had not enough lighting. The level of presence is much dependent on the dancer's-embrace or expression and dancer-space. Most of the respondents from the virtual spectators agreed that the virtual performance had fell short of achieving this sense of presence.

Most of the respondents agreed that a site-specific performance should function as a means to embody and give form to experiences and interactions with the site, but the obstacle was that the camera was positioned too far away from the dancers, and the lighting of the dancers was bleak.

The theme of the site-performance for these student-dancers were to chase your dream no matter what the obstacle is. Although respondents had agreed that the message of the dances came across well to them and that the dancers were highly talented, the physicality of the site did not offer a viable stimulus in the creation process.

So overall, three issues were raised among the virtual spectators, that of the need for higher resolution in the technology, that of the lighting of the hall itself, and also the site chosen which had no artistic or cultural context. One respondent suggested that in view of the theme of the performance, chasing one's dream, the

dancing could have been done along the corridors of the classes. Most spectators responded with:

“It was a good performance, but it would be better if I had seen it live. Can see that the dancers are talented.”

Thus, the concept of presence in a virtual environment and the meaning of “presence” with respect to real world experiences are totally different. The performer performing or acting within a physical environment is fully present live in front of spectators. Whereas a virtual performer depends a lot on the technological dimension.

Conclusion

The spectators who watched the MAP Fest 22 site-performances comprised of friends of those who perform, or friends of friends and fellow artists, the relatives of the organiser and about 20% were new audiences, made up of interns and a few who work for the Studio who was recording the event. Our observation of these site-specific performances did not have shared audience. There were us, a few academics who sought out the site-specific, there were no news reporters. The organiser has to find the public and consider the means by which site-specificity is performed to a potential audience. Most of the spectators who came expressed their satisfaction in the sharing of energy, the sense of community coming together. The new spectators commented that they enjoyed as it was different.

“Yes, I enjoy sharing this live experience because I feel like I am communicating with other attendees; I can relate and connect with the attendees; I like sharing the energy in this closed space and making art is great to share are some of the responses”.

The site-specific work mutually reinforced the process of creation. The site, whether it is the bar, or an abandoned warehouse, an industrialised building influenced the movements the artists performed and conversely, their movements perform the space, thereby creating the atmosphere. This is the way through which a space is brought to life. That is the attraction and challenge of a site-specific performance.

While it is true that streaming or video recording may be able to capture a performance in time and space, there is that feeling that something is lost in the process. That loss is the presence of the performer.

The difficulty or challenge is changing the site-specific performance to its virtual form and to preserve and engage the original narrative. In a site-specific performance, spectators just have to be present in the space/place rather than watching at it as pure image, visually so as to absorb the emotions and the presence of the performer.

The conclusion is that the site performance cannot be enjoyed without the vividness and presence of performer and spectator in same space.

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The Pitch Control Ability: Discovery on the Reality of Demo Singers Compared with Music Industry Criterion

Xuejie Huang, Mei Foong Ang¹

Department of Music, Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia
43400 Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
e-mail: meifoong@upm.edu.my¹

Abstract

Pitch Control Ability of singers stands for the capability of a singer to control the pitch within an acceptable deviation from the required levels. It is useful in assessing the overall capabilities of singers, especially for demo singers. Demo singers need high Pitch Control Ability to facilitate high quality and efficient studio work. To study whether demo singers Pitch Control Ability matches with the requirement of the music industry, we extracted 83 pitch samples of five demo singers. Through exploratory data analysis, one-sample T-test and a sequence of vary criterion, we found that in practice demo singers' Pitch Control Ability is beyond the current experience-based standard of the music industry (± 50 ct). We further identified that common demo singers can control the pitch deviation at the level of ± 25 ct in practice. Our study not only provides quantitative assessment on the Pitch Control Ability, but also proves that the Pitch Control Ability of demo singers is above the perception level of music industry.

Keywords: demo singer, music industry, pitch control, recording

Introduction

The basic skill of singing is the pitch perception and control, which affects the emotion of the composition (Hakanpää et al., 2019) and the overall impact of the song. Pitch Control Ability is one of the key abilities required for professional singers. It serves as a useful metric in assessing overall singing abilities (Hutchins et al., 2014). Demo singers refer to the singers who record song demonstration in the recording studio before the song is being sung or dubbed by the contract artist for official release, under commercial use or as teaching materials. Demo singers need the high level of Pitch Control Ability, a crucial skillset that is required especially for the studio work (Herbst & Albrecht, 2018).

The traditional assessment of the Pitch Control Ability is through qualitative and empirical approach: the sensing of the singing. However, this approach depends on human judgements that sometimes are objective and varies with human's ear and signal acoustics (Range et al., 2018). We lack quantitative studies with standardized methodology to accurately track the performance (singing wave) of demo singers. As

a rule of thumb, experienced musical practitioners recommended the ± 50 cent(ct) as a criterion to assess the Pitch Control Ability of professional singers, including demo singers (Hutchins et al., 2014). If a demo singer's pitch is more than 50 cents above or below the desired pitch, this singer will then be judged as one with inadequate Pitch Control Ability. Meanwhile, the interview with the sound engineer pointed out that it was acceptable as long as the singer's pitch is within 50ct deviation as suggested by Wei that "Generally speaking, an excellent demo singer has the good pitch perception. They will not sing exceeding 50ct of the right pitch in the real recording" (2012).

The 50ct deviation criterion has not been quantitatively assessed yet. The advancement of digital sound recording brings us the opportunity to quantitatively analyse Pitch Control Ability in a coherent and scientific way. In this study, through collecting representative samples, with current advancements in digital recording and pitch identification, as well as solid statistical analyses, we addressed the following two questions: is the empirical criterion (± 50) in music industry adequate in assessing the performance of demo singers? If not, which criterion is more appropriate in quantitatively evaluating demo singers' Pitch Control Ability?

To answer these questions, we sampled five representative demo singers from different regions in China and with different backgrounds. We selected these demo singers as they have at least three years' experience working as demo singers. S1, who graduated from the music department of a university, had worked for demonstration mainly for bel canto style in the past five years. S2 is a vocal professor who specialized in the folk and dramatic field for eleven years. Different from the background of S1 and S2, S3 is a pop demo singer who had never obtained the professional music education. She was discovered through a vocal competition when she was a postgraduate student. S4 demonstrated both folk and pop songs in her leisure time when she was an undergraduate student majored in music performance and took demo singer as a career for eight years. S5, who graduated from a conservatory, worked as a music arranger as well as the pop demo singer for ten years.

These five demo singers were invited to record novel songs that they did not know before. Since this assessment of demo singers is in the context of the recording industry, the Pitch Control Ability is judged by the signal acoustics through the Plug-in Melodyne (Editor version, UK), which quantified the deviation of every pitch from each demo singer compared to the correct pitch in unit of cents. When the deviation value is 0 cent, it indicates the best level of pitch control ability. However, it is very difficult to reach 0 cent in practice in the real recording. We used the deviation as the metric to assess the Pitch Control Ability.

Pattern of Pitch Deviations

There were 16-17 pitches extracted for each singer. The deviation values could be positive or negative. We used the absolute values to assess the magnitude of the deviations and for the following analyses. Descriptive statistics capturing the pitch deviations of five singers were shown in Table 1. We used P1 – P5 to represent testing results for S1 – S5 (five demo singers).

Table 1

Descriptive statistics of pitch deviations

Descriptive Statistics										
	N Statistic	Minimum Statistic	Maximum Statistic	Mean		Std. Deviation Statistic	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Statistic	Std. Error		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
P1	17	1	28	10.12	1.968	8.115	.888	.550	-.079	1.063
P2	17	5	63	24.12	4.286	17.670	.806	.550	-.194	1.063
P3	16	0	45	22.75	3.562	14.248	.099	.564	-.897	1.091
P4	16	1	53	17.38	3.896	15.586	.965	.564	.015	1.091
P5	17	0	52	22.65	3.671	15.137	-.055	.550	-.464	1.063
Valid N (listwise)	0									

The minimum pitch deviation for P1 is 1, the maximum is 28, and the mean is 10.12. Among P1- P5, the mean is smallest in P1 (10.12) and largest in P2 (24.12). The performance is therefore best in P1. The standard deviation was smallest in P1 (8.115), indicating the stability of the performance of P1.

Through exploratory data analysis, we firstly test the normality of the data. The skewness of the P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5 were below 2, and the Kurtosis were under 8. Referring to Byrne and Van de Vijver (2010), the five groups of sample values were normally distributed. The Q-Q Plot (see Figure 1) shows that the data were close to the line, which further indicated the sample value were normally distributed.

Pitch Deviations in Music Industry vs. in Practice

The music industry generally uses 50 ct as the empirical standard to assess demo singers' Pitch Control Ability. As shown in Table 1, the average pitch deviations were all under 30ct. It seemed that demo singers' performance met the expectation of the music industry. But the pitch control level could not be judged merely by the average values. In this case, the samples should be tested statistically to ensure whether the performance of demo singers in practice met the expectation of the music industry.

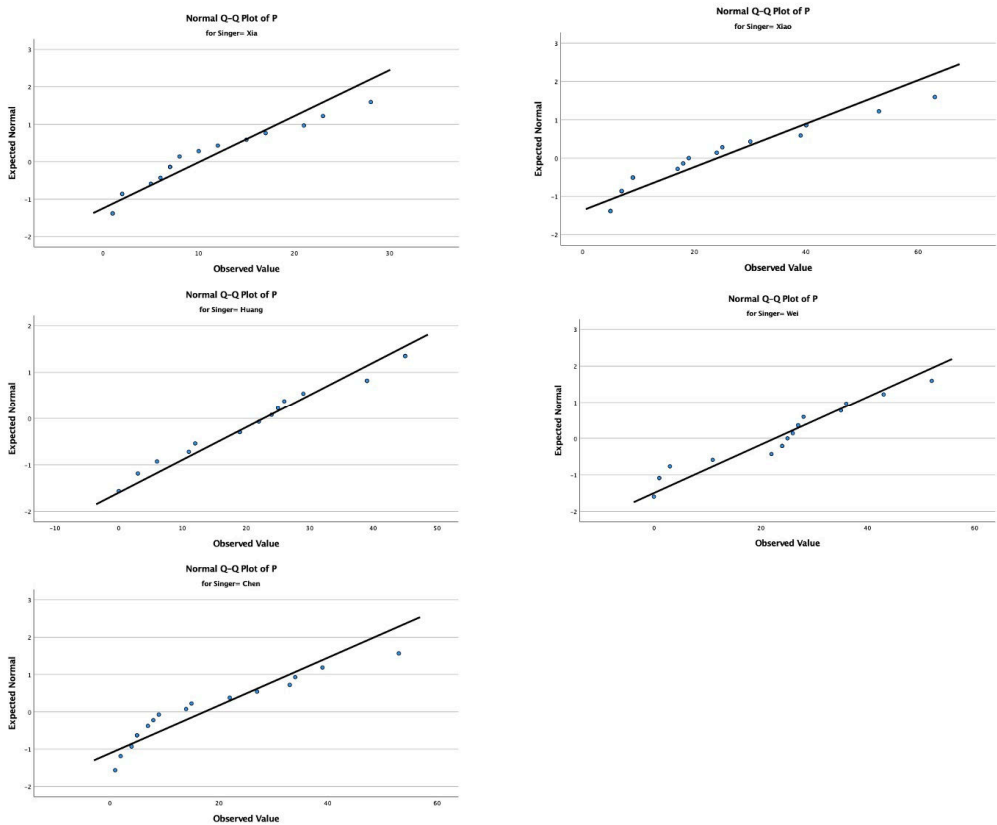


Figure 2. Normal Q-Q Plot of the pitch deviation.

Table 2

One-sample T-test on the difference between pitch deviations and 50

One-Sample Test						
Test Value = 50						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
P1	-20.263	16	<.001	-39.882	-44.05	-35.71
P2	-6.039	16	<.001	-25.882	-34.97	-16.80
P3	-7.650	15	<.001	-27.250	-34.84	-19.66
P4	-8.373	15	<.001	-32.625	-40.93	-24.32
P5	-7.451	16	<.001	-27.353	-35.14	-19.57

We tested whether the mean of each pitch group was statistically different from 50. One-sample T test (Table 2) shows that the means of pitch deviations for each group is statistically lower than 50 ($P < 0.001$), which means that the Pitch Control Ability of all the five singers is better than the 50 music-industrial-criterion. The mean difference between the best performed demo singer and 50 is -39.882 ct, and the worst performed difference is -25.882 ct. These differences were far from zero. Based on this evidence, the current empirical music industrial criterion for professional singers is very loose for demo singers. In the next, we further analyse the new bound of the current demo singer's pitch control level.

The Boundary of Demo Singer's Pitch Control

We conducted a series of statistical tests with varying criteria, from 50, 45, 40, 35, 30 until 25. With the value of 25, we found a statistical significance in the difference (the mean vs. 25) only in P1, while the means of other 4 groups (P2 to P5) were not statistically different from 25 ($P > 0.05$) (Table 3). We tested the criterion of 26, we found the means of two groups showed statistically significant difference ($P < 0.05$). Based on this evidence, the value of 25 serves as an approximate boundary value that best captures the overall performance of demo singers' pitch control. The average pitch control level of the current demo singers in studio displayed a range around 25ct. The excellent performance like P1 could even reach about 10 ct deviation (Table 1). Compared with the reference value indicated by the music engineer (50), demo singers' performed better than the empirical perception used in music industry.

Table 3

One-sample T-test on the difference between pitch deviations and 25

One-Sample Test						
Test Value = 25						
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
P1	-7.561	16	<.001	-14.882	-19.05	-10.71
P2	-.206	16	.839	-.882	-9.97	8.20
P3	-.632	15	.537	-2.250	-9.84	5.34
P4	-1.957	15	.069	-7.625	-15.93	.68
P5	-.641	16	.531	-2.353	-10.14	5.43

Conclusion

The boundary value of demo singer's pitch control ability is within ± 25 ct, which is more precise than the requirement of the music production. The demo singers could meet the expectation of the basic singing ability in the music industry. The boundary value of demo singers' Pitch Control Ability is ± 25 ct, which is more precise than the common empirical music industrial standard. The demo singers not only met the expectation of the basic singing ability required by the music industry, but also

showed higher capability in pitch control. They are fully capable of handling the novel original songs.

Discussion

The demo singers are sitting in the content production team, which is the critical factor of success in the music industry value chain (Saragih, 2017). The music production procedure becomes self-sustaining and autocatalytic (Paul, 2012), thus the criterion of the content production is developing according to the actual capacity of the demo singers. Unfortunately, there is no documentation to support whether the demo singer's pitch control ability has been maintained at the current level. And there is also lack of evidence to infer whether the demo singer's singing ability has improved with time.

The adaptation to the acoustic environment is a significant quality of studio musicians (Paul, 2012) as well as the demo singers. The demo singers' high level of pitch control ability is supposed to root in the good perception of the acoustic environment. In other words, the singer who properly perceives the acoustic environment will master more outstanding singing ability.

Since the parameters of demo singer's singing ability can be directly reflected on the Plug-in Melodyne, the industry may consider using the boundary parameter revealed in this study as the standard for identifying demo singer's professionalism. In addition to the industry standard settings, the results can also be used for intelligent screening of demo singers, and the humanized reforms for plugins in pitch correction.

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Biography

Xuejie Huang is currently a PhD student of Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Before joining her PhD program, she has been working as an independent musician for multiple years. She is the CEO of the Weake Studio, which produces more than 30 original music compositions per year, including invited compositions that were highly valued in China. She won more than 50 local and national awards for her high-quality products. In 2022, she served as the producer and the lyricist of the theme music for the Milan Motorcycle Show (EICMA). She was the producer for the theme music of Chinese Football Association international competition. She published multiple articles in the area of music industry and sound art. She obtained her M.A. and B.A. from Department of Art, Chongqing University, Chongqing, China.

Empowering Women Through the Lens of Matriarchy in Creating “SOPAN” Choreography

Muhammad Fairul Azreen Mohd Zahid
LASALLE College of The Art,
School of Dance and Theatre, Singapore
e-mail: fairul.zahid@lasalle.edu.sg

Aimi Nabila Anizaim
Digital and Imaging Arts, College of Creative Arts,
Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), Malaysia
e-mail: aiminabila@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

For this paper, my focus is on the practice as research which will include the final choreography as a reference to an outcome of this research writing. When we discuss societal issues, it will closely relate to religion and culture. My focus is on creating choreography emphasizing “matriarchy” or empowering women. This choreography attempts to review the status of Malay women in Peninsular Malaysia by examining the impact of Islamic revivalism and industrialization on the Malay family, kinship, and marriage system through “Adat Pepatih,” which is norms in one of the states in Malaysia, Negeri Sembilan. It elucidates how religious reform and automation have had similar effects in increasing gender differences, paternalism, and misogyny, shifting the rule of bilaterality in the direction of patriarchy and considerably undermining the status of Malay women in both traditional and modern society. In general, women have often been looked at as “sex symbols” from the perspective of gaze. This research will show the other side of women’s credibility and empowerment of the culture and society to become “communitas.” The combination of tradition and contemporary movements has emerged in the cross-cultural performance inside this work. It shows the value of its practice and the acceptance of other cultures to be implemented in Malay culture. This creative work metaphorically explained the meaning of SOPAN from the perspective of matriarchy. Through this discourse, the view from the semiotic foundation perspective will support how occurrences within dance discourses as texts through a semiotic lens.

Keywords: choreography, contemporary dance, gaze, gender, matriarchy

Introduction

From the context approach of the Malay community in Malaysia, a matriarchy is an approach and practice that is used to show the power, rights, or strength of women to own something, dominate and obtain absolute ownership of the property, property rights, and influence that allows a tribe to be seen as dominated by Women and

articulately described our fascination with ancient matriarchs through her book; “The myth of matriarchal prehistory, writing” (Cynthia Eller, 2000). According to her, matriarchy allowed us to imagine other women as people whose biological sex and not immediately provide the perspective of women’s strong leadership, creativity, or autonomy, either ridiculous or suspect. It provided a vocabulary for dreaming of utopia and a license to claim that it was not mere fantasy but a dream rooted in an ancient reality. The influence of this culture and approach has made the choreographer produce his work within a matriarchy approach, named “SOPAN,” performed by Jazlyn Tan Jia Yu and Nurul Elyana Hamlan. Both performers graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts, School of Dance and Theatre, Singapore.

This work takes a perspective and practice approach from a man’s view towards women’s rights, which are often manipulative or considered a sex symbol, especially when dressed sexily, seductively, and dominating something by using their physical forms. This choreographic research tries to shift those perspectives by emphasizing that women do have their own influences and should be seen through their characters, thinking, and rights while maintaining the dignity of these women and honors. In Malaysia, one of the southern states, Negeri Sembilan, practices “*Adat Perpatih*,” which is a notable example of the concept of matriarchy (*Adat Perpatih*, n.d.). In *Adat Perpatih*, women’s influence and domination have the absolute right to family inheritances and marital property, indirectly protecting women in the family if they are divorced or abandoned by their spouse. This practice nevertheless prevents the husband from doing polygamy even is seen as contrary to the sunnah of Prophet *Rasulullah S.A.W.* which the men have the right to marry and own four wives at a time if the husband is sufficient. The truth, *Adat Perpatih*’s practices are intended to defend woman’s rights; hence they are not oppressed and used at will. Observation of the women’s influences these days, especially within the perception of society in men, these women are often misinterpreted and pictured are not capable of being leaders due to certain factors such as physical strength, fragile in making decisions, and always seen as the needed to serve the opposite gender will.

At a time, women’s empowerment started to grow within the communities, and conversations about women’s contribution to society were getting more expansive, bigger, and more robust. Over time, with the myriad ways women tend to become powerful and empower the world around us, the idea of matriarchies is becoming salient. Most of the society, where the majority belongs to men, often sees women as companions rather than pleasers. In some religious contexts, women are shown as someone who needs to be cared for, pampered, and given attention. Moreover, this duty relies on the responsibility of the husband once married. The man’s duty and responsibility are expected to take care of his wife as a woman has given birth and to lighten the burden of managing family affairs. Men are often responsible for every heavy job because women are considered weak. However, this scenario began to turn over as many top leaders of countries worldwide are dominated by women these days. The closest example is the New Zealand Prime Minister, led by Jacinda Ardern (Gallegher, 2019).

In this choreographic research, various factors are studied, mainly to show the ability of women to perform various forms of movement that may be considered incapable of being performed by them. Each movement in this SOPAN work has

specific symbolisms and metaphors that show what is regarded as a negative to a positive form. The choreographer also introduces the methods used in creating this piece, which is Schechner's workshop-rehearsal/performance model (1985). The specification of each phrase is interconnected with each other on societal issues, which include cultures, religions, gaze, and gender perspectives. This choreography process will also introduce a different meaning from the standpoint of Speech Acts Theory coined by Austin (1969) based on the different situations. Using Speech Act Theory has helped the choreographer and audience to understand more, especially when it relates to metaphor or symbolism. As Austin and later Jacques Derrida mentioned, the meaning in every movement can be interpreted differently from what they see, feel, and observe. This is because, as pointed out by (Episcopus, 1644), there is always gap, which provides a separator to two opinions and observations. This often happens to the choreography, which leads to the abstract structure (see Figure 1) Workshop rehearsal/performance model by Schechner, 1985.

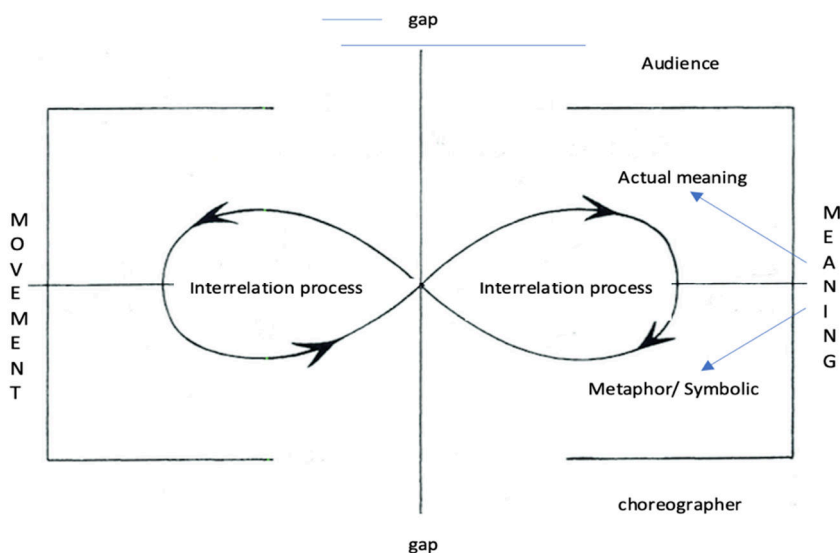


Figure 1. Workshop-rehearsal/performance model by Schechner (1985).

A performance model is a tool for analysing the various levels of interaction in the choreographic making and interconnection between metaphors and symbolic and actual meaning, which are later translated into movements. Schechner's performance model has organized a format for collaboratively exploring new possibilities that inform and define the content and structure of subsequent performance. A performative task is an organizational unit for planning group activities manifest in shared performances. It can refer to tasks such as repetitive activities to an outcome towards the exercise given to the performer during a process and introduce a framework for analysing and proactively organizing work and activities throughout a method of making choreography. Schechner's also explained the possibility explained in the "performance model" and the ideology of "as if,"

“what could work,” and “what we have got” (Schechner, 1985). This model also will give a different perspective on highlighting women’s functionality inside society in creating choreography from another point of view.

The Gap Between Different Viewers

In producing SOPAN, I looked at it from three different angles—the first one is to position myself as a woman, where I need to feel and know what is necessary and what is desired for each woman herself. In this process, it is not enough to see with the naked eye without fully immersing in the feeling. Apart from that, interviews with some communities living in Negeri Sembilan who practice this “*Adat Pepatih*” is observed to get some extent and offer broader perspectives. Second, assigned as an audience seat, I need to know how far the audience can acknowledge this work is portraying the ideology of women’s empowerment instead of sex symbols that is against religion. The last one is to put me as a choreographer. This includes my approach and observation through perspective gaze and gender bias. If we refer to Figure 1, there are two main points in understanding the true meaning of each issue found in this work. For example, the title of this work is SOPAN. If it is placed in the audience’s view, they will aspect this piece will portray the modesty of women and the softness of women. However, the presence of the costume itself has already astray and against the chosen title. This is what I said earlier, everything found in this SOPAN work has an implicit meaning. The perspective and understanding of the audience who watches this piece can be different from the intention of the choreographer when creating this piece. It will always have a gap (Episcopius, 1644). This Gap will always appear between two eyes, as referred to in Figure 1.

This is because, as pointed out by (Episcopius, 1644), there is always Gap, which provides a separator between two opinions and observations. This often happens to the choreography, which leads to the abstract structure. Therefore, it is very likely that the audience and choreographer’s acceptance are different according to the theory of the “Gap” approach by Vedic (1987) written by Anna Bonshek in her book “Transformation within the gap: Liminality and principles of Vedic language theory in performance.” Anna states that everything done between the performer and the audience has a different meaning and delivery (2000). It is divided into two parts where the audience has their imagination and understanding created based on their experiences throughout life or at that time. Every piece of information received through what is seen will be processed by the mind and, in return, give birth to the imagination and a storyline that may be different from what the performer is trying to convey.

Creating specific movements, particularly in this piece, communicates an idea/intention to the onlooker, the movement vocabulary provides the critical vehicle for the choreographer’s artistic expression through the arisen issues. The ideology behind this creation is to show women’s empowerment through dance using societal issues. Of course, from the audience’s perspective and gaze, it is always about entertainment. Most of the audience tends to see and feel direct translation. For example, dancer A oppresses dancer B—for the audience, it needs to show the symbol of oppressing. In SOPAN, most of the deliberation is through precise movements

from beginning to end. It is very hard to identify the narrative in this piece; however, it is full of the message to be delivered.

People generally recognize dance as a bodily practice centered on establishing an innate and intelligent corporeal understanding of oneself, movement potentials, and bodily techniques. Regardless of academic, professional, or recreational purpose context, dance is considered a physical practice that lends to the habituation and training of the body. Through this conditioning, choreographers pass along a great deal of information to dancers, peers, and audiences. The ideology of using text in making choreography and how we use our body to deliver text using performative utterance is one the vital roles in this research. For several decades, understanding the relationship between movements and meaning has been addressed and theorized from various perspectives and experiences. Scholars have addressed topics including the dancing body and limited participation in dance choreography (Gard, 2006; Burt, 2007; Risner, 2008); how the intersection of text, religion, gender, semiotics, and culture can be part of the tools in making choreography. The role of the intersection will be a necessary topic to have arisen. It will give an idea to the choreographer to start thinking about what and where to start.

The Symbolism of *Berkemban* in Creating *SOPAN*



Figure 2. SOPAN choreography.

The custom of *berkemban*, wearing a cloth named *Sarong*, which is tied around the chest and untied to the calf, became the starting point for the development of clothing in the Malay world. *Berkemban* is a synonymy by Malay Women as they wear it daily at home and still practicing today, especially when taking a bath. Advent to Islam, women are ordered to wear a *sarong* over the *kemban* to cover the exposed head and shoulders. Another style of *sarong* is by tying it around the waist. The length of the *sarong* fabric is long enough to reach the ankle. In this way, you can see an example of Cik Siti Wan Kembang's elegant dress, which consists of *kemban*, *sarong* fabric, and a long scarf, plus jewelry such as *dokoh*, bracelets, and pendants. The Sultan of Kelantan also announced to any woman who went out without a head covering that they would be punished by smearing black paint on their bodies and faces (Siti Zainon

Ismail, 2006). This also indicates the government's concern about implementing Islamic law in the Malay community.

In context, the meaning behind each costume can be read differently depending on Austin's writing and perspective in the book "*How to do things with words*," He mentioned it always has a different meaning in every single word or text. If we look at the word SOPAN from the audience, they will say or interpret "*wahh.. so sopan...*", or it can be "*mana sopannya?*" (where is the polite?). However, for me, the interplay of the word SOPAN in this piece is to show that even though they are wearing what we call Malay *berkemban* yet, they are still protective of their pride. In the olden days, all Malays women would take a bath at the river together with all women; however, even though there were only women, they still took baths with *berkemban*. The concept of *berkemban* is to show that, as a woman, it is not necessary to be judged as a sex symbol even if they are wearing sexy cloth such as *berkemban*. This is what I referred to as *kiasan* (figurative); the intention is more like to show what need to show without intention; it is more like a constative instead of performative; however, it carries a strong statement behind it.

To some extent, the ideology of *berkemban* in this work gives room for the choreographer to see from the perspective of gaze and gender. This is because, as stated at the beginning, in producing this work, the choreographer looks at it from different angles, including as an audience. If placed from a man's perspective, the point of view of his gaze must be different. Therefore, it will have a different meaning. Nevertheless, if put from a woman's perspective, it may be seen as an emphasis on all women having rights and desires. This probability was emphasized when producing this work. The message needs to be in line with the needs of the situation. As mentioned by John Berger (2008), two eyes may interpret it differently based on desire and interpersonal thoughts. However, as mentioned earlier, the intention of using such a costume is to ensure it reflects the concept of semiotics (Saussure, 1980).

Conclusion

This research and produce a SOPAN choreography provide an ideology and approach to raising the rights and causes of women's power in a community. Women are capable as men and should be treated equally. No doubt, their ability and power are something to look at. They are taking an example, the late Queen Elizabeth, who ruled the country for 93 years and is widely known for its strong power. The context of creating SOPAN not only offers symbolic stories in various aspects but also gives a new breath in showing the strength of women in a community, whether in Malaysia or other countries. The opposing view of women as sex symbols can be seen from different aspects and strengthen it for women.

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Biography

Muhammad Fairul Azreen Mohd Zahid was a Principal Dancer/Choreographer in ASK Dance Company for several years and a Dance teacher at several Local Universities in Malaysia, including the National Academy of Arts Culture and Heritage (ASWARA) and University Technology MARA (UiTM). He has collaborated with several artists, local and international. He has produced several full-length and mixed-bills performances for a tour in Beijing, Los Angeles, New York, Jakarta, Indonesia, Philippines, and Chicago. He is one of the country's leading young artists, a prolific and versatile choreographer/dancer working in disciplines of contemporary, Ballet, Malay dance, Chinese classical dance, Indian classical dance, and jazz. He has been awarded best choreographer, best group performance, and best overall production in the Short and Sweet dance competition, Dance Escalator Project, Cameronian Arts Awards, and many more. In 2015 he was Awarded a Star Scholarship by Sime Darby Foundation to pursue his MFA study at NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He has been invited to several residencies in America, including the University of California (UCLA), as an international guest artist; He was a two-time finalist for the Yokohama Dance collection in 2021 and 2022. He is also one of the emerging young scholars and has been writing several papers on dance choreography and attended local and international conferences. Currently, he is teaching at LASALLE College of the Arts, School of Dance and Theatre, Singapore, focusing on dance performance, dance technique, and choreography. He is also currently taking a Ph.D course at the University of Malaya (UM) focusing on Choreography.

Aimi Nabila Anizaim is an animation lecturer for the digital and Imaging Arts school at the College of Creative Arts, UiTM. She graduated from the University of Dundee in the United Kingdom with honors in Animation VFX. Her expertise is in 3D animation, storytelling, and visual communications in arts. She is also working on social studies on communities. Currently, she is experimenting and intertwining designs with optical technology in her studies.

Embrace Our Color: Nationalism in Philippine Popular Music

Hiroko Nagai

School of Social Sciences, Ateneo de Manila University
Katipunan Avenue, Loyola Heights Quezon City, Philippines
e-mail: nagai.hiroko@gmail.com

Abstract

Nationalism has been one of the major themes in Philippine music. Since the end of the nineteenth century, music has been used to oppose the dominant power, or uphold national identity at different points in history. In the 1970-80s, nationalistic songs were vigorously produced under the Marcos regime. These included “Ako’y Isang Pinoy” (I am A Filipino), “Kay Ganda ng Ating Musika” (How Beautiful Our Music is), and “Tayo’y Mga Pinoy” (We are the Filipinos). “Bayan Ko” (My Country), a propaganda song under American rule, regained popularity as a protest song against the dictatorship. They were successful in the music industry and became a platform for the subsequent music scenes. Santos (2013) argued in the context of colonialism that nationalism was manifested in two streams of thought, a perceived pride in one’s capability and self-identity as a people, and this political state of Filipinism was deliberately constructed in the music repertoire. It was also observed in songs in the 1970-80s. In 2021, a popular pop band, Ben&Ben released “Kayumanggi” (Brown). The title represented the pride and beauty of being Filipinos. Now, how is the indication of national identity and pride used for new audiences in a different political environment? This paper investigates the recent Philippine popular music repertoire that expresses nationalism and argues that it is not the manifestation of ideological aspirations but is located in a dialogue between the global citizenship of the Philippine middle class and advocacy for justice for vernacular culture.

Keywords: global citizenship, nationalism, national identity, popular music

Introduction: Music and Politics in the Philippines

In the Philippine Presidential Election of 2022, the song “Ako ay Pilipino” (I am a Filipino) was used for the campaign of Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. It was originally commissioned by First Lady Imelda Marcos in 1981. The song came back for the political campaign of his son who eventually won the election race and became the current President of the Philippines. Nationalism has been one of the major themes in Philippine popular music. In Philippine history, the period between the 1870s and 1930s saw intense national consciousness toward independence from colonization. It resulted in a significant body of nationalistic music. “Bayan Ko” (My Country) was one of the most renowned songs during the period. It was composed originally with Spanish lyrics and expressed opposition to the American rules over the Philippines.

Santos (2013) discussed that nationalism was manifested in two streams of thought: a perceived pride in one's capability to compete with the dominant culture for equality and self-identify as a people. Filipinism, with an emphasis on nationalistic themes and deliberate use of Philippine cultural elements, was constructed in the art music repertoire. It became stronger in the 1970s and 1980s under the dictatorship and was established as a genre in the musical mainstream. Now, it is a recurrent theme in the more recent music scene. The question is; how does nationalism manifest in the global generations? This study argues that it is not the manifestation of ideological aspirations but is located in a dialogue between the global citizenship of the Philippine middle class and advocacy for justice for vernacular culture.

The Quest for Filipino Music and Protest Songs in the 1970s and 1980s

The relationship between music and politics became strong again in the 1970s. The government failed in economic development and land reform, and the impoverishment in rural areas and the urban low-income class became more evident. President Marcos declared martial law in 1972 to suppress growing insurgencies and protest movements and attempted to stay in power in the country. The economic dependency on trade and policies of the United States became strengthened, and its interventions came into the country in different forms.

As for culture, the Philippines had never solved the ambivalence between the admiration for Western cultures and the aspiration for indigenous cultures. The diversity of languages and folk/indigenous cultural traditions also hindered the establishment of the concept of national culture. The call for the creation of vernacular culture, together with the anti-war and civil rights movement in the USA, generated various cultural activist movements in the late 1960s and 1970s. Lockard (1996) argued that the rise of politicized popular music was closely linked to the development in the early 1970s of the musical style known as *Pinoy*. The term in the slang of 'Filipino.' The style was a blend of rock, folk, and traditional ballads, *kundiman*. Politicized songs formed a genre in the Pinoy style trend. Florante, one of the pioneer songwriters of this style, created several songs. His most-known song "Ako'y Pinoy" expressed concern for national identity and challenged neocolonialism by criticizing the use of English. His songs were broadcast on radio programs.

Freddie Aguilar (1953-) was undoubtedly the biggest figure in Philippine popular music during that time. His song "Anak" (My Child) was not a protest song but expressed a father's sentiment about his conflict with and love for his son. With a melancholic melody sung by his high-tone voice with characteristic vibratos, the song not only broke the Philippine record charts in 1979 but also became a hit in other countries. Nonetheless, it was his rendition of "Bayan Ko" that made Aguilar a musical icon of the People Power in the 1980s. The song of anti-colonialism came back as the unofficial anthem of the Filipino mass in a situation where the nation strove for liberation and democracy from the Marcos dictatorship (Tadiar, 2008).

On the other hand, First Lady Imelda Marcos was known for her love for music. The love song "Dahil Sa Iyo" (Because of You) was often associated with her as she frequently sang it on public occasions. Originally written in 1938, it could be

interpreted as a patriotic statement when Marcos sang. Balance (2010) argued that it was the deployment of musical art forms in Marcos' performance, which was apparently non-political, that could praise the regime and bolster the execution of Marcos' political agenda of dictatorship, and the role of musical performance consequently shaped the spectacular politics. In this way, the period in the 1970s and 1980s was a time of the musical battle in the political sphere of society. Nonetheless, the quest for Filipino identity in music remained a shared goal by both camps.

The Emergence of Original Pilipino Music

In the 1970s, the music industry in the Philippines started producing folk/rock music with catchy and smooth melodies under the influence of Western folk and rock music. The songs were distributed on the radio or in movies and television. Expanding its audience nationwide from the capital, particularly among the urban youth, this flow of commercially produced music was called Manila Sound. While it included a wide range of music styles, it set a rough standard of Philippine popular music for later generations. While it included a wide range of music styles, it set a rough standard of Philippine popular music for later generations. Conscious attempts to develop distinctive Filipino popular music culminated in substantial growth in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Liu Shunwei, 2022). The start of the Metro Manila Popular Music Festival (known as Metropop) in 1977 was another step forward in this flow of the time. Songs engendered in this trend from the late 1970s were broadly called Original Pilipino Music (OPM).

OPM is an all-encompassing category, or the concept, of Philippine popular music composed and performed by Filipinos. While a great number of songwriters and performers are included, Ryan Cayabyab and APO Hiking Society, the winners of Metropop, could be the artists who represent OPM. Educated in the urban middle class, they freely used Western pop music idioms and produced catchy and smooth melodies. Neither the political statements nor social commentary were characteristic in the lyrics of their hits.

OPM in the Post-Marcos Time: The Product of Middle-class Capitalist Modernity

Joey Ayala came out from a similar background to APO Hiking Society, the upper-middle class, and a graduate of a prestigious college in Manila. Equipped with indigenous instruments and costumes, and female lead singer Bagong Barrios who had the indigenous origin, his band *Ang Bagong Lumad* (The New Natives) was the product of the synthesis of knowledge of World Music and indigenous musical elements, and poetic language with sharp social commentary. Its albums were acclaimed for their high level of musicality, and Ayala's music was well-received by the middle-class audience. He led the alternative music scene, followed by musicians who were not contented with music in the mainstream of OPM.

The period in the 1990s was the last decade in which CDs, TV shows and radio programs were the main channels of the distribution of cultural products. The

sales of CDs reached their peak during this time. Media globalization progressively expanded, and the media industry came to hold a more significant role in both production and consumption. OPM in the post-Marcos time emerged from middle-class capitalist modernity.

Filipino popular music and its commercial blooming were further pushed by the band Eraserheads in the 1990s. Starting as a student alternative rock band in 1989, it became one of the most acclaimed bands in the history of Philippine popular music. Its groundbreaking album “Ultraelectromagneticpop” shipped sextuple platinum with three monster-hit singles including “Pare Ko” (My Pal) in 1992. It is said that the album kicked open the door to a new time in OPM. Their albums were sold internationally, and the concerts were held in different countries. With their boy-next-door look, Eraserheads’ songs did not have a message of nationalism nor advocacy of social concerns but conveyed more the stories of ordinary lives and personal emotions through genial melody lines and harmonies at an upbeat tempo.

By mid-1990, as the number of musicians of the post-Marcos generation who did not experience protest songs as teenagers increased, the border between mainstream and alternative music became blurred. Political messages diminished and the theme of songs was now more about personal life and emotions. With the emergence of Eraserheads and the wave of band music by the younger generation, the search for national musical identity in OPM was shifted to a pursuit of the musical self as an individual striving. Nonetheless, the straightforward expression of national identity never disappeared. Orange & Lemons, a pop-rock band, started in 1999 with the influence of the Beatles and Eraserheads. Releasing singles and albums, the band sustained popularity. The biggest break came in 2005 when the band made an opening song for a TV show series. The song “Pinoy Ako” (I am Filipino) became one of the greatest OPM hits in the 2000s. The simple tune with simple wording attracted the mass audience. The theme of perceived pride in one’s capability and self-identity as a people was evidently expressed in this song.

Nationalism and Filipino Identity in Globalization

In 2021, a pop-folk band, Ben&Ben released “Kayumanggi” (Brown). Filipino associated themselves with brown as their racial distinction. *Kayumanggi* is the word of the Philippine language for brown, particularly the skin complexion with the connotation of innate beauty. The song celebrates the brown skin color of the lover and consequently expresses the pride of being a Filipino.

Kung kayumanggi ang iyong balat [If your skin is brown]
Ipagmalaki sa’n man mapadpad [Be proud wherever you go]
Pagkapanganak hanggang sa paghimlay [From the birth to the slumber]
Yakapin ang kulay [Embrace the color]

Ben&Ben was started by the twins, Paolo Benjamin and Miguel Benjamin Guico. Since its first hit in 2016, the group has vigorously been producing music. It is characterized by sophisticated musicality and language that sensitively tells the story of personal life. The group is known for its consciousness of social engagement such

as the fundraising concerts during the Covid-19 pandemic and the advocacy against plastic trash in Asia. Fully utilizing social media, they are active online and offline. Unlike the former generations, it freely moves between the Filipino language and English, and the local sites and the global sphere, using digital technology. Now, how are national identity and pride in located in the music of this global generation?

In the Philippines, globalization manifested not only in the form of foreign commodities, international travel, and the Internet but also in the increasing number of migrant workers. More than ten million Filipinos, about 10 percent of the population, are working or living abroad. The country is now not limited to its land but a global network of Filipinos, or an imagined community. Globalization was previously seen as a challenge to nationalism in the way that it increases immigration and the movement of people. Deterritorialization and a neo-liberal economy were expected to bring about a borderless global society. A resurgence of nationalism sentiment was, however, observed across the world in the mid-2010s as a potent and enduring political force (Hearn, 2015; Sabanadze, 2010). Many studies on music and politics agreed that music performed and re-stated boundaries and became an indispensable vehicle for nationalist ideologies (e.g., Bohlman, 2009). “Pinoy Ako” and “Kayumanggi” certainly convey pride in being Filipino and could define the collectivity of Filipinos in its imagined community.

On the other hand, this collectivity is transitory. Nationalism in the dichotomy between the country/nation and (neo)colonialism and the dictatorship was transformed into identity politics. The quest for national identity is no longer for the country but a personal endeavor. In this situation, the Philippine middle-class exhibits two directions without contradiction: the internalization of global citizenship and the aspiration for vernacular culture. While “Pinoy Ako” in 2005 indicates the boundary of the nation, “Kayumanggi” does not entail the demarcation between inclusion and exclusion of identity formation. Written in 3/4 time of the Philippine musical tradition, the music video “Kayumanggi” co-produced by National Geographic seems to represent Philippine local culture, featuring the coastal communities of the northern part of the Philippines. Nonetheless, musically imagined ‘home’ is not the country/land but within the innate self of individuals.

Conclusion

This paper aimed to investigate the Philippine popular music repertoire that expressed nationalism. Nationalism has been one of the major themes in Philippine music. At the end of the nineteenth century, many protest songs were created to convey their hope for liberation from colonialism. Filipino musicians started the quest for Filipino identity in music. With their deliberate intention to incorporate indigenous and traditional musical elements with Western musical training, nationalism manifested in two streams of thought: a perceived pride in one’s capability to compete with the dominant culture for equality and self-identify as a people. Since then music has been used to oppose the dominant power, or uphold national identity at different points in history.

In the 1970-80s, nationalistic songs were vigorously produced under the Marcos regime. Aguilar revived “Bayan Ko,” a propaganda song under American rule, and it regained popularity as a protest song against the dictatorship. Broadcasted by radio and TV, the songs were successful in the music industry and became a platform for the subsequent music scenes. On the other hand, Metropop became a venue where Filipino popular songs were created without political messages. “Kay Ganda ng Ating Musika” embodied depoliticized music with Filipino identity. This move eventually resulted in the formation of OPM. It was supported by the growing middle class and the recovery of the national economy from the failure of the dictatorship.

As globalization was more and more involving every aspect of Filipino lives in the 1990s and 2000s, OPM flourished on the platform of middle-class capitalist modernity. Political ideologies lost their place in music, and the personal search for identity remained. Nonetheless, “Pinoy Ako” strongly sang for the collectivity of the Filipino people and gained popularity. “Kayumanggi,” on the other hand, shows a different kind of nationalism for an imagined, and transitory, community of Filipinos. It does not involve the demarcation of inclusion and exclusion of identity politics. Rather, it expresses the personal journey of the quest for self-identity which is located in a dialogue between the global citizenship of the Philippine middle class and advocacy for justice for vernacular culture.

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Biography

Hiroko Nagai, Ph.D. is an anthropologist. She is a faculty member at the School of Social Sciences, Ateneo de Manila University and a Professorial Lecturer at the College of Music, the University of the Philippines. Her publications include *Transnationalizing culture of Japan: Dramas, Musics, Arts and Agencies* (2010). She is a koto player and composer, too.

Performing the Cultural Identities of Contemporary *Guqin* Performers in Shijiazhuang, China

Qu Hui Wen

University Pendidikan Sultan Idris

e-mail: huiwenqu9@gmail.com

Clare Suet Ching Chan

University Putra Malaysia

e-mail: clarechan@upm.edu.my

Abstract

The *guqin* is a seven-stringed plucked zither that was played by the Chinese literati as a private activity for themselves or to a lesser extent, for friends, during ancient times in China. After the founding of New China (1949) and under the guidance of the new cultural policy, *Guqin* players abandoned the traditional Confucian ideology in *qin* artistic performance and developed a cultural identity that served the public. Today, contemporary *guqin* performers are creating new musical performances that represent their cultural identities in the context of modernization and globalization and under the influence of new national cultural policies. They are no longer representatives of a particular single cultural identity but a pluralistic identity. In this paper, I will examine the *guqin* players identity by analyzing their; (a) musical style, techniques and repertoire of the *guqin* players, (b) choices of music repertoire, compositions and arrangements, and (c) movement, gestures and performative elements that accompany their playing. I will conduct ethnography including interviews and participant observation of a local *guqin* training institution in Shijiazhuang.

Keywords: globalization, *guqin*, identity, modernization, pluralistic identity

Introduction

Feudalism was established in China during the Zhou Dynasty (475 B.C.). According to Qian (2013), “the most important thing in the 300-year history of the Western Zhou was the creation of the feudal system of government” (p.135). From then until the fall of the Qing Dynasty (1911 AD), the feudal system was the centralized authoritarian system in China. Politically, the feudal period saw the implementation of monarchical dictatorship and centralization of power. Culturally, Confucianism was the dominant culture. Socially, the feudal patriarchal family system was the foundation. Therefore, people in the feudal period identified with their own selves and the state based on Confucianism as the dominant ideology of the ruling class (Miao, 2006). The development of the *guqin* during the feudal period was also closely linked to

Confucianism.

China entered a period of rapid upheaval after the end of more than two thousand years of feudal rule. With the Modern Era (1920-1949), it witnessed some of the most violent upheavals from the fall of the Qing Dynasty, the civil strife of the warlords, the rise of the Communists, the invasion and eventual defeat of Japan, the establishment of the People's Republic of China (Yung, 2008). The establishment of New China (1949) left China in a state of destruction—the Chinese Communist Party made many changes in the field of ideology to consolidate power. Mao Zedong expounded the fundamental nature of socialist ideology by combining the basic principles of Marxism with the practice of the Chinese revolution. The principle of building socialist ideology with Marxism as the guide and the Communist Party of China as the leader was stipulated from the fundamental system of the state (Wang, 2020). The effective economic policies introduced under the leadership of the Communist Party allowed China's economic development to emerge with vigor. The Chinese people responded to the call of the state to improve their backward living environment and threw themselves into the production and construction of the new China with great enthusiasm. A mass identity was adopted under the socialist ideology. The socialist ideology also influenced the identity of the *guqin* art which evolved from a class identity, which was a reverence for Confucianism, to an identity that embodied the life of the masses and demonstrated popular culture.

Contemporary China is the largest developing country in the world. China's economy has been growing rapidly and its comprehensive national power has been increasing, and it has become a great power with global influence since its reform and opening up in 1978. The contemporary development of the *guqin* reflects a series of changes in people's identity with the art of *guqin*. *Guqin* performances have dramatically transformed in response to the May Fourth Movement, the founding of the People's Republic of China, and the reform and opening of the country. Both the musical works of the *guqin*, the identity of the *guqin* community, and the practice and social attributes of the *guqin* have entered a new context again and again. I suggest that there are three main influences in *guqin* performances today; (a) the national cultural officers that shape the modern *guqin* performances by using intangible cultural heritage preservation and cultural heritage as the thematic discourse, (b) professional *guqin* performers that use various techniques, including Western techniques to perform the modern *guqin*, and (c) the public who have commercialized *guqin* performances in realizing its value as a commodity.

The Guqin

The *guqin* is one of the most important instruments in Chinese culture which has survived almost two millennia of unbroken history. A vast repertoire of musical notation, written documentation and references in refined poetry and folklore, theory of performance practice and aesthetic philosophy has been documented on the *guqin* (Yung, 2017, pp. 506-508). Historically, the *guqin* has evolved from a “class art” during the *Chun Qiu* dynasty (770-470 B.C.) to the “people's art”; Mao era (1949-1976); as a “national culture” (after 1976), “world Intangible Cultural Heritage

(ICH)” (2003) and “cultural capital” (2003 till present). The evolution in *guqin* musical performance, playing techniques and compositions embody the changing ideology, interests, and goals of its players. These players are subjected to different social-political landscapes that shape and reshape their interest in learning to play the *guqin*. Historically associated with the literati, Yung (2017) argued that the literati performed privately to satisfy and quell his mind, turning inwardly toward himself rather than outwardly toward an audience (p. 506). Contrary to this phenomenon is today’s early 21st century *guqin* players, who turn outward—performing the *guqin* to impress their audience musically and visually. Some perform the virtuosic classical repertoire with complex musical techniques accompanied by stylized body movements and gestures. They dress in Chinese traditional costumes to assert cultural essentialism. Others prefer to play contemporary popular tunes that are enjoyed by the contemporary audience, dressed in modern fusion costumes to demonstrate their modern yet traditional identity. In this paper, I hypothesize that *guqin* has evolved from a medium for the inward satisfaction of an individual to an outward portrayal of individual identity.

Theories of Identity

Identity is dynamic and evolves in response to historical developments and practices. Hall (1996) argued that “identities are never unified and, in late modern times, increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions” (p. 4). Deeper understanding of identity requires an exploration of the history of its emergence and the many factors that have shaped its development to relate it to contemporary identity. Castells (2009) states that “the construction of identities uses building materials from history... power apparatuses and religious revelations. But individuals, social groups, and societies process all these materials, and rearrange their meaning, according to social determinations and cultural projects that are rooted in their social” (p. 7). In other words, when the subject of identity changes, the content of identity or its representation is not fixed, because the development of the context behind the identity makes everyone involved in the identity a potential interpreter of that identity. Hall (1996) also elaborates that “actual identities are about questions of using the resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from,’ so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves” (p. 4).

Culture refers to the consensus of a group on a certain cultural behavior. Culture depends on its participants’ interpretation of what is happening around them, and “making sense” of the world, in broadly similar ways (Hall et al., 2013). The contemporary development of *guqin* art reflects the modern change of traditional practices, and the modern construction of *guqin* cultural identity reflects the relationship between musical works and cultural subjects, the transformation of the identity of *guqin* groups, and the impact of the changing social environment on *guqin* art. I intend to explore these issues in greater depth in my research.

The Class Identity of Qin Musicians

The *guqin*, historically categorized as “music of the literati” has provided a “stereotype” impression of the *qin* player. Miao (2006) states that the *guqin* musicians during the pre-Qin dynasty did not have a fixed identity—they were emperors, nobles, hermits, folk artists, literati, and so on. After the time of Confucius, a large proportion of scholars were among the *qin* players (p. 5). The *guqin* became a vehicle for imparting the Li Yue system (Li Yue was a means by which the Zhou Emperor maintained its power. It defined the kind of music forms that could be used by different classes of people). The music played on the *guqin* was used to elevate the player and elevated music to the realm of virtue, which is the soul of traditional Chinese musical thought (Wang, Chen & Du, 2013). Under the Li Yue ideology, the *guqin*, as a musical instrument coincided with Confucianism’s pursuit of Li (systems and codes of conduct based on moral reasoning), De (educate people with morality) and Zhongyong (the highest standard of ethical behavior, the human nature of neither good nor evil, the impartial gentleman’s personality) naturally became an instrument respected by Confucianist.

The collapse of the *Chun Qiu* (770-470 B.C.) Dynasty resulted in many of the scholars from the declining noble class to form the literati community (Nan, 2009). At this time the relationship between *guqin* and literati has gradually become stronger. After the *Wei and Jin* (265-420 AD) Dynasties, the *guqin* was further removed from the public and became an instrument for the literati. Playing the *guqin* was regarded as an embodiment of class status. “The art of the *guqin* was a symbol of the traditional scholar class, one of the symbols used to distinguish it from other social groups” (Wang, 2009). From the restrictions placed on the use of the *guqin* by the *Li Yue* system to its exclusive use and development by the literati class in the period of the monarchical dictatorship, playing the *guqin* was an important means for the literati to express their political views and “lament” the fate of their community. *Guqin* is central to their sense of identity as a cultural elite, and emblematic of intellectual and moral perfection (Yung, 2017). During the long feudal period, the use of the *guqin* by both emperors and literati bore the mark of class hierarchy, and the identification of the literati with the *guqin* also reflects the unique sense of responsibility of the class hierarchy of the literati.

The literati tried to convey their philosophy, ideas, and identity through the *guqin*. *You Lan* (orchid), the oldest *qin* score in existence, is said to have been composed by Confucius, expressing his depression and sadness that he was not appreciated by the wise ruler, just like an orchid growing among weeds. *Guang Ling San* (Popular *qin* score in the ancient *Guangling* area) is said to have been composed during the *Qin and Han* dynasties, which depicts the tragic story of *Nie Zheng*, the son of a sword maker, who stabbed the King of Han to avenge the death of his father and then committed suicide. The melody is impassioned and mournful and the atmosphere of fighting and killing is expressed throughout the piece. It expresses the spirit of struggle of the oppressed against the tyrant. The repertoire of *Jiu Kuang* (happy drinking and forgetful of worries) tells the story of the *Wei and Jin* dynasties, when the literati Ruan Ji was deeply at odds with the politics of his time, so he lived in seclusion in the mountains, playing the *qin* and chanting poems to forget his

worries.

Min Guo (1912-1949) Period

At the beginning of the 20th century, the decline of the country led to an intellectual questioning of Confucianism and traditional culture. The new cultural movement of May Fourth, which preached democracy and science, dealt a fatal blow to traditional culture. The spread of Western “Enlightenment” ideas and the eager expectation of the entire intellectual community for a new kind of state accelerated the dramatic decline of the *guqin* art. The social unrest and the outbreak of war made traditional culture struggle for survival. Although the war and the disintegration of traditional culture led to the near loss of the *guqin* art, the cultural identity of the qin people did not change essentially because the ideology of the ruling class did not change fundamentally.

From the beginning of the twentieth century until the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the development of *guqin* culture in Shanghai was mainly carried out in a relatively closed and self-disciplined manner. During the time of major social change, the *guqin* players in Shanghai expressed their cultural identity with their historical memory and the preservation of traditional *guqin* cultural norms of behavior. (Hu, 2009)

We can see that the identity of the *Guqin* people at that time was nostalgic and fixed on historical and cultural memories.

New China

Until the founding of New China in 1949, the new cultural policy limited the legitimate existence of all art forms to serving the masses.

The mass of the people ... it refers specifically to a specific class of the people—the proletariat or the workers, peasants, and soldiers—which excludes both the bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, and the intellectuals. So, the national culture that served the “masses” excluded not only the “feudal culture” that served the feudal aristocracy, but also the “Western culture” promoted by the progressive literati of the May Fourth period, and even the intellectuals. (Wang, 2011)

This led to a shift in the overall ideology of the qin practitioners from inheriting the traditional hierarchy. Under the strong integration of socialist ideology, different types of cultural resources were allocated by the state. The 1953 literary and artistic rectification movement, the Communist Party clearly put forward the policy of *Bai hua qi fang* (Free development of various artworks in different forms and styles) further promoting the policy of “coming from the masses and going to the masses” (Wang, 2011). All the arguments attached to the art carried a clear political mark. The pieces they performed and composed also no longer reflected the class ideology of traditional literati but strove to express the political life of all citizens of the country

(Wang, 2011). *Dong Fang Hong* (Eastern Red), *Sheng Li Cao* (The joy of victory), *Gong She Zhi Chun* (*The spring of Gongshe*) and other works with a clear political identity came into being. Under the normative constraints of the new cultural leadership, the identity of the *guqin* player was formed in the integration and homogenization of the socialist ideology.

Late 1970s—Early 21st century

The reform and opening-up policy of the late 1970s changed China's economic system and started the process of modernization. Economic and cultural policies shifted to a more liberal direction. With the intensification of international cultural competition, traditional arts are valued by the state. *Guqin* was incorporated by the state into the genealogy of excellent national culture.

Globalization

Along with the reform and opening, China has entered the wave of globalization, and the non-Western countries in the opening up are facing a crisis of cultural identity due to the new colonization of the strong Western culture, and the only way to strengthen the cultural identity of a nation is to develop the local cultural resources. In the vision of globalization, China is trying to build a moderate image of cultural power by making “national cultural heritage” a “world cultural heritage.” The *guqin* is freed from its class identity and constructed in the national discourse as a public cultural property shared by members of all nations. Globalization is not only a process of economic integration, but also includes worldwide political and cultural integration and competition (Wang, 2009). In 2003, the art of *guqin* was successfully applied as an oral intangible cultural heritage of humanity, making it a symbol of cultural identity connecting Chinese people around the world and strengthening the Chinese people's sense of belonging to the nation.

The recognition by UNESCO as an oral and intangible cultural heritage of humanity has certainly accelerated the transformation of the *guqin* into a modern popular culture. Hu (2009) stated that “there was only one training institution in Shanghai before 2000, but after 2003 and up to 2007, there were about 20 amateur training institutions” (p. 69). Today, there are countless training institutions throughout the country. The development of the *guqin* over the years has seen the mainstream ideology at the national level continue to reinforce the traditional cultural values of the *guqin* by promoting traditional Chinese cultural knowledge to the public. With the help of the professional education system — modern professional music education in conservatories, and the examination system of the *Guqin* Association — a professional *guqin* training model has been formed, producing many professional talents. The rapid development of the cultural industry brought about by reform and opening, and globalization has made the *guqin* art an object of cultural consumption for the people. The *guqin* art has been packaged as a cultural commodity and is becoming more and more popular among the masses of consumers. Nowadays, many *guqin* pieces have been created based on popular elements. Contemporary people are more interested in the works of pop songs transplanted from the Chinese style than

ancient tunes. *Liang Liang (Cool)* is a *Qin* score based on the episode of the TV series. The hit of the TV series made this song very popular. It is also a favorite among *qin* players (Figure 1).

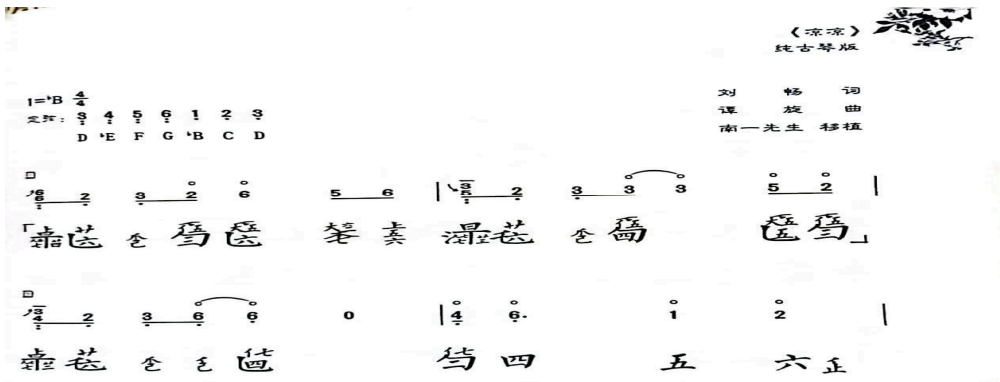


Figure 1. This *guqin* piece is adapted from the popular song (*Liang Liang*).

Zhi Ci Qing Lv (Only this blue and green) is another *qin* score Adapted from a dance music of the 2022 Spring Festival Gala. This dance was inspired by the painting of Wang Ximeng, a painter of the *Song* (1127-1279) Dynasty. The popularity of this dance led to the transplantation of *guqin* pieces, and soon *guqin* pieces based on this dance score appeared on the Internet and were downloaded by *qin* players with great enthusiasm (Figure 2). From these two examples of scores, we can understand that the choice of repertoire by contemporary *qin* enthusiasts is not fixed within the traditional classical repertoire of ancient music. repertoire that played with modern aesthetic and value standards are widely accepted by the public. These contemporary pieces do not have the deep ideological meaning of the ancient pieces that have been able to pass down for thousands of years regarded as classics. Contemporary pieces are like fast-moving consumer goods, ebbing and flowing as they become more popular for a while, but are soon replaced by new *guqin* pieces.

只此青绿

1=C $\frac{4}{4}$
正调定弦
♩=48

作曲：吕 亮
古琴指法编配：王煜菡

2022
知乎 @裴尔君

Figure 2. Photo of the dancers on the stage of the Spring Festival Gala, who are performing *Zhi Ci Qing Lv*.

Objectives

In this paper, I will examine the identity of contemporary *guqin* players through (a) musical style, techniques, and repertoire of the *guqin* players; (b) choices of music repertoire, compositions, and arrangements; and (c) movement, gestures and performative elements that accompany their playing.

Methodology

I will use the ethnographic method—in-depth research, interviews, and participant observation on the local *guqin* training institution—*Jin Yun Qin Zheng* in Shijiazhuang. In 2019, to spread the art of *guqin* and promote the culture of *guqin* to the public, Jin Yun institution started a course on *guqin* which they called a public service class (low enrollment restrictions and low tuition fees). I will take part in the public service classes of the institution, learn and interact with the players, and learn about the dissemination of the *guqin* among the general public.

I will interview Cao Lan Suo, the founder of the *guqin* public service class. I will also interview *guqin* teachers and students who are studying in the public service

class. and explore the development and changes of the cultural identity of the contemporary *guqin* players. In addition, since my research is related to the development of the *guqin*, it will involve the examination of historical factors, so I will review and organize relevant historical and audio-visual materials to prepare for the theoretical study of contemporary changes in the *guqin*. In terms of the contemporary art of *guqin*, I will also follow the platforms of YouTube, WeChat, TikTok to enrich the information of *guqin* foreword.

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Biography

Qu Hui Wen graduated from Hebei Normal University with a degree in musicology and a major in vocal performance. She is currently a second year PhD student at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, majoring in ethnomusicology. Her undergraduate and graduate studies were in vocal singing (bel canto) and she is currently a teacher at a secondary vocational arts school in China where she teaches vocal singing. In addition to performances and vocal competitions, Hui Wen has also published several papers on vocal singing and vocal performance. With a strong interest in sociology and anthropology, Hui Wen chose ethnomusicology for my doctoral program and currently focusing on the contemporary development of *guqin* art.

Clare Suet Ching Chan is an associate professor of Ethnomusicology at the Music Department of the Faculty of Human Ecology at Universiti Putra Malaysia. Prior to this she taught at the music department of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris from 2002-2022 and held appointments as the deputy dean (research and graduate studies) (2011-2017) and chief editor (2015-2021) of the Malaysian Journal of Music. Clare served as the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM) national liaison officer from 2018-2019. She is now an executive committee member of the Southeast Asian Directors of Music (SEADOM). Clare graduated with a PhD in Music (Ethnomusicology) from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (2010); Master of Arts (Ethnomusicology) in 2002 and Bachelor of Arts (Music) in 1998 from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang. She was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship (2005-2007), the Asia-Pacific Graduate Fellowship in Ethnomusicology from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (2005-2007), the East-West Center Graduate Degree Fellowship (2008-2010) and the Sumi Makey Scholars Award for Arts and Humanities (2008) for her PhD studies. Her research interests include applied ethnomusicology, sustainability, heritage advocacy, tourism, modernization and globalization of music.

Recreating *Jiangnan Sizhu* in Hangzhou for Tourism, Commercialization, and the National Cultural Policy

Yun Ke Li

Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
35900 Tanjong Malim, Perak Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia
e-mail: liyunke929789754@gmail.com

Clare Suet Ching Chan

Department of Music, Universiti Putra Malaysia
Serdang, Selangor Malaysia
e-mail: clarechan@upm.edu.my

Abstract

Jiangnan sizhu (si: silk; zhu: bamboo) is a Chinese musical ensemble that comprises traditional musical instruments such as the *pipa*, *yangqin*, *erhu*, and *dizi*. It is usually performed for self-entertainment, accompanying rites of passage and ceremonial events. In 2008, it was listed as one of the People's Republic of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH). In Hangzhou, there are three factors driving the demand for *jiangnan sizhu* performances: tourism, commercialization, and national cultural policy. In the last few decades, the dynamic tourism industry in China has created a demand for cultural tourism. In Hangzhou, *jiangnan sizhu* is perceived as a "creative" musical form that can be reconstructed to satisfy the global tourist's gaze and represent Hangzhou's musical heritage. However, the tension between the protection and innovation of musical heritage as an issue constantly exacerbates in the field of heritage tourism, these reconstructions might be viewed as diluting and destroying the "authenticity" of *jiangnan sizhu*. Through ethnographic fieldwork, interviews, and participant observations, this paper examines (a) the musical performance of *jiangnan sizhu* in response to the tourist gaze, (b) the musical reconstruction in *jiangnan sizhu* in response to commercialism, and (c) *jiangnan sizhu*'s musical performance in response to national cultural policy.

Keywords: commercialism, *jiangnan sizhu*, musical heritage, national cultural policy, tourism

Introduction

Modernization has largely impacted the Chinese music in the late 20th and early 21st century. While westernization and professionalization were important trajectories, commercialization, commoditization and globalization are on the rise since 2001 (Yang & Saffle, 2010, p. 88). Among the bands and singers that have risen to global popularity are the 12 Girls Band, Jiuyue Qiji, Sa Dingding, Gong Linna and etc. In

this paper, I discuss the musical performances of a contemporary traditional *jiangnan sizhu* (*si*: silk; *zhu*: bamboo) group known as the Heartbeat Girls of Hangzhou in response to China's national cultural policy, tourism and commercial industry.

Background

The *jiangnan sizhu* (*si*: silk; *zhu*: bamboo) is a Chinese musical ensemble that comprises traditional musical instruments such as the *pipa* (plucked lute), *yangqin* (struck zither), *erhu* (bowed lute), and *dizi* (traverse flute). It originates from the Jiangnan (central southern China) province and is found in cities such as Suzhou, Hangzhou, and Shanghai (Thrasher, 1985, p. 238). *Sizhu* performers gather weekly in a large room or teahouse to perform for leisure and recreation. Traditional *jiangnan sizhu* repertoire commonly played are the Eight Great Songs: “*Man Liuban*” (Slow Six Beat), “*Zhonghua Liuban*” (Moderatamente and ornamentation Three Six), “*Sanliu*” (Six Beat), “*Man Sanliu*” (Slow Three Six), “*Huanle Ge*” (Song of Happiness), “*Sihe Ruyi*” (All Things Harmonious), “*Xingjie*” (Along the Street), and “*Yunqing*” (Cloud Celebration) (Thrasher, 1985). In response to the May Fourth Movement (4th May-28th June 1919) that encouraged the spirits of patriotism, progress, democracy, and science, Zhen Jianwen (1872-1935), an outstanding Chinese *jiangnan sizhu* musician and educator, organized the *Shanghai Datongyuehui* which aimed at pursuing a “scientific” Western musical performance style, new repertoire was added in *jiangnan sizhu* including: “*Chunjiang Hua Yueye*” (Spring River Flower Moon Night), and “*Nishag Qu*” (Rainbow Costume Song) (Wu, 2010). In 1957, those *jiangnan sizhu* performance groups that aimed at innovation heritage were labeled as right-wing and asked to disband on their own under the “Anti-Rightist Campaign”. During the Cultural Revolution (the mid-1960s to 1970s) in China, *jiangnan sizhu* was banned—practice space shrank and groups disintegrated. Until the “Hundred Flowers Campaign” was reintroduced, whose basic principle was to artistically enable different forms and styles to freely develop in 1978, *jiangnan sizhu* performing groups gradually recovered.

During early 21st century, *jiangnan sizhu* ensemble has recreated its performances in response to new political, social and economic context including the National Cultural Policy, tourism, and commercialization. In the next section, I will discuss how three factors— national cultural policy, tourism and commercialization influence the performance of a female *jiangnan sizhu* group known as the Heartbeat Girls.

National Cultural Policy

The National Cultural Policy (NCP) of China (2017), the thirteenth-five cultural development and reform plan outline was established for socialist cultural power and to improve China's cultural “soft” power. The National Cultural Policy of China strives to protect, safeguard, and sustain Chinese culture through (a) Intangible Cultural Heritage policy, (b) artistic creation policy (national arts fund project, Chinese opera revitalization, and public welfare performance), (c) public cultural

services politics, (d) protection of cultural relics, (e) cultural industry policy, and (f) market censorship and national cybersecurity policy.

Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) policy

In 2011, former Chinese president Hu Jintao (presidential term: 2003-2011) established the safeguarding of heritage as one of the official aims of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage Law (The Central People's Government of the PRC, 2011). China's initial concept of ICH was the protection of heritage that emphasized "authenticity" and "original" arts through state-organized collecting, editing, translating, publishing, and exhibiting in a "sterile socialist science laboratory." This activity was conducted by the four-tier hierarchies' censorship and management at the national, provincial, county, and municipal levels. However, the safeguarding of *jiangnan sizhu* in the context of an "old" worldview, a religious function, and highly improvisatory skills in a dynamic performing environment today is idealistic and difficult to sustain.

The actions above raise concerns for if intangible heritage belongs to all people and needs to be transmitted to future generations (ICH national slogan), shouldn't the people living within heritage zones retain any rights to explain, modify and recreate their heritage it? (Silverman & Blumenfield, 2013). In China's twelve-five plan (2011—2016) government gradually notice that the cultural heritage should let the local resident engage and added that traditional Chinese culture can be creative transformation and innovative development (ICH, 15 December 2017). In 2013, the Chinese president Xi Jinping (2012 till present) spearheaded the "dynastic intangible cultural heritage," a new concept that protects the national ICH with a quite different perspective (Hao, 2022). It continues the "authenticity" protection principle; however, the aim is to recreate cultural heritage for cultural industry, rather than static protections between the experts and authorized official groups. The "dynastic intangible cultural heritage" emphasizes modernization and industrialization for the long-term goals of "Cultural powerful China" (*wenhua qiangguo*). *Wenhua qiangguo* refers to the world's best country for cultural soft power).

The Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) policy has a strong influence on how the *jiangnan sizhu* represents itself in the context of China's ICH goal. Therefore, I intend to examine how the Heartbeat Girls retaliated toward the vision of ICH.

Tourism

The tourism industry provides a space where local stakeholders can claim that they are performing for the benefit of cultural identity and international status, not to enhance their own regional heritage discourses. In this geopolitical environment, China combined cultural heritage and tourism as a "soft" power aimed to realize a "Cultural powerful China" in 2035 (State Council of PRC, 2022). Tourism has re-energized Hangzhou's local stakeholders to reinvent, recall and rejuvenate their traditional performing arts. For example, the Hangzhou cultural center create a musical theatre for reproducing special *jiangnan sizhu* in Hangzhou through girl *sizhu* musicians, re-invented national costume, and contemporary visual art to tourists on

the “Chinese Cultural and Natural Heritage Day” (the second Saturday of June), whose the event aimed to promote the influence of Chinese culture.

Masked in the national image of “Cultural powerful China”, *jiangnan sizhu*’s local stakeholders can bypass the discipline of “authenticity” from government authorities to participants in the heritage-making process. While stating that national cultural policies affect the *jiangnan sizhu* performances, I also examine the performer’s agency in recreating performances for tourism.

The “Tourist Gaze”

Urry (1990) describes the “tourist gaze” as a “gaze” that has been particularly constructed from the visitor’s anticipation to engage a set of stimuli and fantasy for the short “departure” of a limited break from daily life. While not only the tourists are curiously staring at the locals, but local audiences are also curiously looking back at them. This gaze of both tourist and local resonates with Maoz (2006) asserts that the tourist gaze also influences the local gaze, there is “the mutual gaze” to illustrate this reciprocity that the host-guest relations of cooperation with tourist’s demand and tension hidden in resistance.

Therefore, in response to attracting the “tourist gaze” of exoticism’s “authenticity” for tourism profit, *jiangnan sizhu* music performances tend to cater to the tastes of tourists. For instance, more and more tourist events prefer to hire female *sizhu* musicians such as Heartbeat Girls band with re-invented exotic and colorful national costumes, instead of hiring male *sizhu* musicians who wear normal “grandfather” style clothes as in the past. These changes of *jiangnan sizhu* to satisfy the “gaze” are also related to Urry and Larsen (2011) posit that now frontiers are permeable between the tourists and local community that:

Distinctions between hosts and guests are increasingly fluid in mobile societies where there is much travel for work and pleasure, and places are globally connected with wide-reaching cultural, social, and economic networks. Tourist places are not unique, bounded and fixed ‘islands’ that are subject to external forces producing impacts. They come into existence through relationships. (p.64)

Many modern tourists seek “authenticity” because they experience “alienation” (Marx, 1964); labor becomes part of the commodity under the never-ending capitalist work mode, which leads to psychological alienation of a less degree of integration, common value, and belonging from the social community. Those with more depth in alienation will adopt stricter criteria for judgment as marks of authenticity (Cohen, 1988). Local stakeholders encourage tourists’ beliefs of seeking authenticity and establish the “stage” according to the tourist’s own “strict criteria” (MacCannell, 1973; Cohen, 1988). In consequence, three elements can be the tourist’s own criteria in *jiangnan sizhu*: the young and slender woman, short and gentle melody, and ancient eastern musical instruments such as the *pipa*, *erhu*, and *guzheng*. I argue that those “authenticity” tourists’ criteria are based on their exoticism imagination because the *jiangnan sizhu*’s exotic feminine musical expression seems to can heal the hustle and bustle of their “alienation” through exotic, mysterious, and hesitant female smiles.

For example, in my preliminary fieldwork, the request of the Hangzhou Grand Canal tour agent under the tourist's criteria put forward to the Heartbeat Girls band included; female performers, Chinese instruments, and repertoires suitable for modern people. According to Smith (2003), arts organizations are forced to please their audience when original art forms are not suitable for mainstream interest with tourists (p. 137). Traditional *jiangnan sizhu* performances are so slow, lengthy, and repetitive, therefore it is perceived that tourists frequently will feel bored and not be able to retain attention. Tourists expect a kind of instant satisfaction that maximizes exoticism in minimal time. There are also tourists whom Feifer (1985) coins as "post-tourists" that are travelers who want to encounter joys which include various faculties and know that there is no authentic cultural experience. Therefore, I argue that the Heartbeat Girls band not only uses female musicians but also recreates the repertoire to satisfy the tourist's expectations which maximize the exoticism in a limited time.

Initially, exoticism in anthropology and tourism studies emphasized the westerner's curiosity over the culture of the "other". Huggan (2001) defines exoticism as "the aestheticizing perception of the other, people-objects-places different from subjectively familiar reference systems, which renders them strange and, simultaneously, domesticates. Differences may refer to aspects of culture, gender, language, music, dance, and others. Tourists from industrialized nations often seek out their imagination of people in third-world countries—the exotic, erotic, and happy savage (Bruner, 2005, p. 191). For example, Balinese music performances mesmerize audiences with their rich, shimmering sounds played in *kotekan* (interlocking) patterns. The Balinese recognize the tourists' thirst for the exotic, authentic and unpolluted, therefore, they collaborate in a "touristic coproduction", a strategic essentialization of their culture to accommodate to the tourists' desires (Bruner, 2005, pp. 192-193). Desmond (1997) argues that Hawaiian tourism highlights the display of "natives" (p. 89) while Goss (1993) states that Hawai'i is sold as feminized liminality (pp. 664-688). I note that the *jiangnan sizhu* performer's play to the tourists' desire for "exoticism" through aspects of cultural differences such as costume, musical instruments, and music. They consciously "self-exoticize" by dressing in modern creations of traditional Chinese costumes and utilize only acoustic traditional Chinese instruments to invoke of an image exoticism. There is also a tendency to highlight the female body through stylized movements and gestures in capturing the attention of their audience (Figure 1). The music systems performed by the *jiangnan sizhu* ensemble include improvised version of songs such as "*Neo-Sanliu*" (Neo-Three and Six), "*Zhonghua Liuban*" (Moderatamente and ornamentation Three Six), "*Chunjiang Hua Yueye*" (The Moon Night of Spring River and Flowers), and "*Moli Hua*" (Jasmine Flower) are typical repertoires created for tourists. The musical performance embodied a single melody line simultaneously with a kind of complex monophony according to the basic music score, all the characteristics of instruments can completely show in the repertoire.



Figure 1. Hangzhou Heartbeat Girls band performing in the water and ink park (photo by Yun Ke Li, 2022).

Digitalization Technology in the Commercialization of *Jiangnan Sizhu* Ensemble

In the age of booming digital technology, there are many opportunities for individuals and groups to promote and sell their music and performances. The international platforms are Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube, Pandora, iTunes, Amazon, Tik Tok and other. Among these digital platforms in China are Weibo, Tik Tok, Bilibili and others. Individual and group musicians can upload their music on these platforms and gain popularity through diverse marketing strategies.

Taylor (2014) maintains both advertisers and musicians know the power of music. He states that sounds developed for advertising have found their way into mainstream popular music, and vice versa, in what has become a constant interchange (p. 8). According to Taylor (2015), production, advertising, marketing, and consumption means quickly producing music, media blockbusters, and portfolio management techniques for music and musicians. In the modern era, the development of social media and digital mobility has brought huge changes to the market economy; only one photo, short video, film, or influencer can make any traditional performance a hashtag. Those potential heterogeneous buyers in the world asked for the diversification repertoire and digitalization performance of *jiangnan sizhu* for maximum selling in commercialization competition.

Digital technologies can help musicians do what they have been doing instead of creating new forms of behavior immediately in capitalism (Taylor, 2015). In the marketing competition, social media, and digital platforms (e.g., Weibo, Tik Tok, Bilibili, etc.) can combine teenagers' interests with traditional ICH performing forms as a brand or neo-Chinese style IP through advertising and marketing for young people online. Therefore, most groups of *jiangnan sizhu* in tourism employed by

private entrepreneurs too under the economic benefit, have simultaneous online live streaming and recording individual CDs. In commercialization events, musicians build a diverse repertoire for different consumer tastes and constantly highlight the spectacular parts of their performances with film original soundtrack, hot hits, and catchy songs to hook the heterogeneous consumption. Facing the various consumption markets, the popularity of the repertoire is the chief element instead of “authenticity.”

In my preliminary fieldwork, I classified the repertoire of *jiangnan sizhu* performance groups in four different events including tourism, commercialization, media live, and CDs in response to heterogeneous market needs and new digital technology (Table 1).

Table 1

The performing repertoire of jiangnan sizhu (Source: Heartbeat Girls band, personal communication, July 2022)

	Tourism event (i.e. Hanzhou Grand Canal Festival)	Commercial event (i.e. <i>Song Yun</i> cultural month)	Tik Tok live streaming	Individual CDs
The repertoire of <i>sizhu</i> system	<i>Sanliu, Zhonghua Liuban</i>	Not performing	Not performing	Not recording
Professio nally recreated repertoire	<i>Chunjiang Hua Yueye, Pinhu Qiuyue</i>	<i>Chunjiang Hua Yueye, Pinhu Qiuyue</i>	Not performing	Not recording
Chinese pop- songs	Girls love, <i>Xiao 'ao Jianghu, Juan Zhulian, Shui Longyin</i>	Girls love, <i>Xiao 'ao Jianghu, Juan Zhulian, Shui Longyin</i>	<i>Da Yu, Mingfei Qu</i> (A Dream of Splendor OST)	<i>Yueban Xiaoyequ</i> (Hangkong pop- song), Too Much
Non- Chinese songs	Not performing	Not performing	My Heart Will Go On	Not recording

I posit that the diverse repertoire and convenient digital technology allow the *jiangnan sizhu* musicians to engage with contemporary daily life through the constant promotion in social media and advertising for entrepreneurs. These musicians rarely perform for traditional “authentic” *sizhu* music unless it is for a special tourism event. However, digital technology has enabled them to create new meaning, gain an

economic asset, and conserve their culture through the commercialization process. The new meaning of recreating embodied a young, energetic, confident, and beautiful image of *jiangnan sizhu*. Female *sizhu* musicians are an elegant, respectful, lucrative occupation rather than should be ashamed for showing off the music technique with their good-looking and graceful bodies.

Objective

In my research, I will examine (a) the musical performance of *jiangnan sizhu* in response to the tourist gaze, (b) the musical reconstruction in *jiangnan sizhu* in response to commercialism, and (c) *jiangnan sizhu*'s musical performance in response to national cultural policy.

Methodology

I will use ethnography as my research methodology. My ethnographic fieldwork will be conducted in the city of Hangzhou. The specific major site will include Lotus Shadow Performing Arts Center. In terms of positionality, I am both emic (insider) and etic (outsider) in my research group. I can participate in the Heartbeat Girls band as a pipa musician because I have been playing pipa since the training experience for Hua yue tuan and my master's degree is the pipa performing in Xi'an Conservatory of music. Meanwhile, I was hired by Heartbeat Girls band in August 2022 as their Tik Tok manager.

My data collection will be conducted through participant observation, interviews, and audio-visual recording. I will interview the ensemble of Heartbeat Girls band and Hangzhou Cultural Center which will include Mr. He Bo, aged 27, a young *Dongxiao* musician; Ms. Zhang Jia Yao, 24, a *pipa* musician; Ms. Zhang Jia Qian, 25, an MC company manager; Mrs. Miao Chu, a *guzheng* musician; Mrs. Chen Xiao, a *yangqin* musician; Ms. Zhang Jing Jing, a *pipa* musician; Mr. Ye Jin Liang, a *daran* and percussion musician; Ms. Chen Rui Rui, a Hangzhou cultural center manager; and Mrs. Chun Lai, a *bei yin* (Han costume company) manager, etc.

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Biography

Yun Ke Li is currently a Ph.D. (Ethnomusicology) student at the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris. Master of Arts (Chinese Instrumental Music Performance) in 2021 from Xi’an Conservatory of Music, China, Xi’an. Bachelor of Arts (Pipa Performance) in 2018 at Huaibei Normal University, China, Huaibei. She has gain the second prize both for the 3rd Anhui Province “Yellow Mountain Cup” Erhu & Pipa

Competition (2017) and Singapore Raffles Culture and Arts Festival (2020) - national musical instrument competition-Pipa (Western division of professional youth section). She has given three individual concerts in Xi'an (2021 and 2019), Huaibei (2018). She is good at playing Pipa, Daruan, Zhongruan as a member of the Fuyao muzu chamber ensemble.

Clare Suet Ching Chan is an associate professor of Ethnomusicology at the Music Department of the Faculty of Human Ecology at Universiti Putra Malaysia. Prior to this she taught at the music department of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris from 2002-2022 and held appointments as the deputy dean (research and graduate studies) (2011-2017) and chief editor (2015-2021) of the Malaysian Journal of Music. Clare served as the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM) national liaison officer from 2018-2019. She is now an executive committee member of the Southeast Asian Directors of Music (SEADOM). Clare graduated with a PhD in Music (Ethnomusicology) from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (2010); Master of Arts (Ethnomusicology) in 2002 and Bachelor of Arts (Music) in 1998 from Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang. She was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship (2005-2007), the Asia-Pacific Graduate Fellowship in Ethnomusicology from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa (2005-2007), the East-West Center Graduate Degree Fellowship (2008-2010) and the Sumi Makey Scholars Award for Arts and Humanities (2008) for her PhD studies. Her research interests include applied ethnomusicology, sustainability, heritage advocacy, tourism, modernization and globalization of music.

The Remaking of the Fengyang Flower Drum into a Fitness Dance

Xiaowei Wang
School of Music, The Philippine Women's University
Manila, Philippines
e-mail: 57599643@qq.com

Abstract

The Fengyang Flower Drum is a traditional art form with a flower drum, a small hand drum. The performer dances, talks, and sings, while beating the drum. The Fengyang Flower Drum has been transforming through the years eventually becoming a fitness dance developed by the Fengyang County Sports Association for the Elderly. This paper looks at the development of the Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance into a form that finds new significance in modern times. This is framed within concepts of tradition change and the public space. I begin with the musical culture of Fengyang county and its overall cultural and artistic environment responsible for the birth of the Fengyang Flower Drum. I then explore its musical characteristics and dance steps and compares it with its modern fitness iteration; showing how the music and movements were transformed to allow the public to participate in its performance while reaping its fitness benefits. The success of this fitness version of the flower drum dance is a model of how traditional art forms can be recontextualized into a fitness dance. It shows how traditional cultures can be transformed into the art forms acceptable for all ages. Today, the Fengyang Flower Drum has found new meaning in contemporary times by meeting the needs of people through public space activities. It has found new participants and new audiences. The popularity of Fengyang Flower Drum fitness dance has endowed Fengyang Flower Drum with a new life allowing its sustainability in the future.

Keywords: fengyang flower drum, fitness dance, recontextualizing, tradition

Introduction

Fengyang County of Chuzhou City is located in the eastern part of Anhui Province in the eastern part of China. Fengyang is the hometown of Zhu Yuanzhang, the first emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1368-1398) who ruled China for almost 31 years. During this period, "Fengyang Flower Drum" as a form of art developed. It continued to proliferate during the reign of Emperor Yongzheng (1723-1735) and Emperor Qianlong (1735-1796) during the Qing Dynasty.

The Fengyang Flower Drum is a comprehensive art form with Flower Drum which is a small hand drum used as props and for sound. The performer dances while beating the drum, talking and singing. Fengyang Flower Drum, Fengyang Flower

Drum Opera and Fengyang Flower-drum Lantern, are known as the “Three Flowers of Fengyang,” and they are regarded as the important cultural heritage of Fengyang.

The Fengyang Flower Drum musical form has transformed in its contextual meaning through the years. From entertainment music of the ordinary during the Ming Dynasty, it developed into a musical expression of poverty among the migrant people who wanted to return home during the Qing dynasty. This resulted in the spread of the musical genre to all parts of the country including Hong Kong and Taiwan in various forms.

Today, Fengyang Flower Drum has been transformed in various ways to meet the demands of people due to the continuous improvement of living standards, one of which is the demand for fitness. Since 2016, Fengyang County Sports Association for the Elderly has jointly combined the art of Fengyang Flower drum with fitness sports, thus creating a Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance which integrates performance and fitness to better promote Fengyang Flower Drum, and to meet the needs of fitness enthusiasts.

This paper looks at the development of the Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance into a form that finds new significance in modern times. I explore its musical characteristics and dance steps and compare it to its modern fitness iteration, showing how the music and movement have changed to engage the public in its performance while enjoying its fitness benefits.

Typical Melody Features of Traditional Fengyang Flower Drum

When Fengyang Flower Drum is a general term for a folk-art form produced in the historical process of Fengyang County. A large number of classical tunes and lyrics have emerged throughout the long history of hundreds of years.

Through the analysis of Fengyang Flower Drum music modes, it is found that Gong (Do), Shang (Re), Jue (Mi), Zhi (Sol) and Yu (La) as five Chinese national modes are used, and the scale also covers five tones, six tones and seven tones. However, most of them use the pentatonic scale, and a small number of them use the hexatonic scale and the heptatonic scale. Bian Gong (Si), Qing Jue (Fa) and Bian Zhi (#Fa) are mainly used in the use of partial tones, and Run (bSi) is not used. Thus, there is no application of Yan Yue scale. In addition, it is a unique usage to raise Gong (Do) to decorate Shang (Re) before and after it.

Fengyang Flower Drum seems to have a unique preference for Zhi (Sol) mode, accounting for more than half of the total number. Followed by Gong (Do) mode, accounting for about a quarter of the total. Although the other three modes are all involved, the number is much less, and the more representative one is the Fengyang Song of Shang (Re) mode.

Melody Characteristics of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance. The first set of Fengyang Flower Drum fitness dance uses two Fengyang Flower Drum materials, which are the two tunes of Fengyang Song and Fengyang Flower Drum. In the splicing, however, the mode and tonality have been changed, and the melody structure and orchestration have been changed as well. The music score of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance is as follows (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance Music, recorded by Wang Xiaowei.

From the score, it can be seen that the music is composed of four sections of ABCD, the structure of which is as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1

Music structure of the first set of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance

Intro.	A	A Var.	Connect	B	C	B Var.	A+A Var.	C	B Var.	D	B Var.	Coda
1-4	5-12	13-24	25-32	33-41	42-53	54-62	63-82	83-94	95-103	104-113	114-123	124-132

Beginning with a four-bar introduction, the music uses the rhythm of Fengyang Song. In the absence of the original pitch, it uses Drum and Gong to play the classic rhythm of Fengyang Flower Drum, with Drum and Gong in alternation. Part A is the tune of the first section of Fengyang Song, which is consistent with the original tune, and

eight bars are played. The difference is that the original song uses *Shang* (Re) mode, which has been changed here. The mode of *Shang* (Re) and the mode of *Yu* (La) are presented alternately. Then comes the variation of A, which lengthens the original tune to 12 bars. With two bars added between 4-5 bars of A, 3-4 bars are repeated, which are added parts. There is an 8-bar connection between Part A and Part B. Only Drum and Flower Drum are used for performance, and the part emphasized in the score is the part added by Flower Drum.

Parts B and C use the tune of Fengyang Flower Drum, but they are inverted. Besides, the most distinctive lining tune of the second section of the original tune appears first, with the same *Gong* (Do) mode as the original tune. Part C uses the first part of the original tune, where the tune has shown a big change. The overall melody line is similar to the original tune, but the mode alternates between *Gong* (Do) mode and *Zhi* (Sol) mode. The biggest change is style, as the original Fengyang Flower Drum is cheerful. In this work, the speed of the original tune has slowed down, the rhythm has widened, and the style is lyrical and euphemistic, expressing the gentle mood of Jiangnan. In the subsequent variation of B, the melody structure has remained unchanged, and only the composition of the instrument and the register have changed. So far, the first presentation of the tunes of Fengyang Song and Fengyang Flower Drum has been completed.

This is followed by repeated passages, presenting part A, variation of part A, part C, variation of part B, and a new material D in the middle of two variations of part B. Part D uses bamboo flutes to play different styles with high-pitched voice areas, and integrates the tune of Fengyang Flower Drum with the unique tune of Zhuizi Opera in the Huaihe River area of Anhui Province. Part D repeats once to deepen the impression. At the end of the work, there is a short epilogue, which combines the drum rhythm of the introduction part and the melody characteristics of part B to end the whole piece, and the work ends in *Gong* (Do) mode.

Characteristics of Dance Movements of Traditional Fengyang Flower Drum

The movement characteristics of Fengyang Flower Drum can be summed up as trembling, shaking and swinging. These movements are the important elements of traditional Fengyang Flower Drum Dance, from which we can see the three characteristics of its movements.

Trembling. It plays an important role in the dance of Fengyang Flower Drum. Tremor is divided into big tremor, middle tremor and small tremor. From the literal meaning, we can see that the difference of tremor is closely related to the strength. Tremor is a rhythm or even a small jump made by the whole body with the rhythm according to the rhythm of drums and the strength of music. The middle tremor is used for the rhythm of rippling with the waves like rowing with the drums when walking in the field. Small tremor comes from the action of knee and foot touching the ground, which is light, flexible and changeable.

Swinging. The dancers of Fengyang Flower Drum are mostly women, and the dance exclusively for women naturally highlights the feminine beauty of women.

The flexible swing of the crotch highlights the three bends of the S shape, which becomes the most prominent feminine place of Fengyang Flower Drum. the three bends of Fengyang Flower Drum mainly focus on the crotch, and the swing of the crotch is the main force point to drive other parts, thus making a dynamic curve swing. Therefore, wind swing willow is used to describe the beauty of the dynamic curve in Fengyang Flower Drum.

Shaking. A smooth and graceful movement, such as shoulder shake, which is formed by the form of large joints driving small joints and the basic rhythm of trembling and swinging. The three characteristics of Fengyang Flower Drum imply the graceful and restrained character of Anhui people, and they do not lack the characteristics of flexible dance.

Dance Steps of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance

In the Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance, it is obvious that these three traditional movement characteristics run through the whole process. In September 2020, when I visited Mei Zhoucheng, the city-level inheritor of Fengyang Flower Drum, I filmed a video of his explanation while dancing Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance.

Table 2

Names of dance steps of the first set of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance

1	<i>Danfeng Chao Yang</i> (The phoenix makes a bow to the sun)	<i>Li deng zhuan da</i> (Stand and spin)	<i>Ce zou yao bai</i> (Walk sideways and sway)	<i>Zuo you yao bai</i> (Swing from side to side)
2	<i>Zuo jia you tiao</i> (Left set up, right jump)	<i>Zuo you tiao lian</i> (Pick the curtain left and right)	<i>Pi qiu hua</i> (Leather bulb flower)	<i>Cuo bu zhuan ti</i> (Rubbing and turning)
3	<i>Ti la rao da</i> (Lift and pull around)	<i>Shi zi ya bu</i> (Cross crossover)	<i>Si fang da gu</i> (The four sides beat the drum)	<i>Deng shan hui mou</i> (Climb the mountain and look back)
4	<i>Hua bai tiao bu</i> (Swing and jump step)	<i>Kan zhuan dun li</i> (Turn, squat)	<i>Shang shan bai liu</i> (Go up the hill to place willows)	<i>Zuo you ya tiao</i> (Left and right pressure jump)
5	<i>Deng shan kan ri</i> (Climb the mountain to see the sun)	<i>Bei hou da gu</i> (Drum behind the back)	<i>Bai bu shang da</i> (Swing up and hit)	<i>La shen tuo gu</i> (Stretch and hold up the drum)

According to him, the first set of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance is divided into five parts, each of which has its own unique name. The list of these names is as Table 2.

Names of dance steps of the first set of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance

From the overall dance steps of the first set of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance, it can be known that the essence of traditional dance steps is basically used.

Danfeng Chao Yang (The phoenix makes a bow to the sun), is a classic action in Fengyang Flower Drum. In the natural state of breathing, the palm of the left hand is raised upward and the left palm is raised upward; the right hand holds the drum bar and slightly presses the wrist to be level with the right shoulder; the drum bar should be upturned; and the knees are slightly bent with the left and right feet taken as a step. Nodding is key when doing this, so raise your head in the direction of the drum and nod to the rhythm of the music. This action emphasizes the coordination of all parts of the body, including feet, knees, hands, head and eyes, especially the nodding action, which vividly reflects the steady and graceful posture of Phoenix nodding in the performance.

Hua Bai Tiao Bu (Swing and jump step) action is mainly reflected in the drums on the chest and the slight steps under the feet. In the state of natural breathing, beat a rhythm, step slightly and evenly at the foot, bend the knee slightly, swing the crotch slightly with the change of the center of gravity of the foot, and make a longitudinal drum in front of the chest. The head should be slightly tilted downward as the drum is played backwards. Swing and jump step is a typical connecting movement in the double drum dance. As very useful in the whole dance, this movement plays a great role in all the movements and the scheduling of the stage. This movement is natural and smooth, especially the arc swing of the step with the body, which highlights the elegance and softness of the dance posture.

Conclusion

From the overall dance steps of the first set of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance, it can be known that the essence of traditional dance steps is basically used. For example, *Danfeng Chao Yang* (The phoenix makes a bow to the sun) is a classic action in Fengyang Flower Drum. In the natural state of breathing, the palm of the left hand is raised upward and the left palm is raised upward; the right hand holds the drum bar and slightly presses the wrist to be level with the right shoulder; the drum bar should be upturned; and the knees are slightly bent with the left and right feet taken as a step. Nodding is key when doing this, so raise your head in the direction of the drum and nod to the rhythm of the music. This action emphasizes the coordination of all parts of the body, including feet, knees, hands, head and eyes, especially the nodding action, which vividly reflects the steady and graceful posture of Phoenix nodding in the performance.

Hua bai tiao bu (Swing and jump step), this action is mainly reflected in the drums on the chest and the slight steps under the feet. In the state of natural breathing, beat a rhythm, step slightly and evenly at the foot, bend the knee slightly, swing the crotch slightly with the change of the center of gravity of the foot, and make a longitudinal drum in front of the chest. The head should be slightly tilted downward as the drum is played backwards. Swing and jump step is a typical connecting movement in the double drum dance. As very useful in the whole dance, this movement plays a great role in all the movements and the scheduling of the stage. This movement is natural and smooth, especially the arc swing of the step with the body, which highlights the elegance and softness of the dance posture. The music of the fitness dance incorporates the original Fengyang Flower Drum music elements. Retaining the logical framework of the original tune, it changes the tonality and rhythm to make it more consistent with the needs of fitness dance. Transformed into fitness dance music, two most representative songs of the Fengyang Flower Drum are used. In addition, the dance steps of Fengyang Flower Drum Fitness Dance follow the steps of traditional Fengyang Flower Drum classical dance. The movement range is small, the intensity of exercise is not that high, allowing many people, even the elderly, to participate.

From being a beggar's art form to its present iteration as a fitness dance, the context of Fengyang Flower Drum has changed. This contextual shift is similar to Zumba, which is also a fitness dance that evolved from local dance. Combining many South American dance forms such as samba, cha-cha, salsa, reggae, flamenco and tango, it is now popular all over the world and has found new space in gyms, parks, and other similar places. The contribution of the Fengyang Old People's Sports Association to Fengyang Flower Drum is like the Chinese version of Zumba, but they are each based on their respective local culture and act in their own way, developing and transmitting their dances in another form.

To conclude, this paper provides a model of how traditional art forms can be recontextualized into fitness dance. It shows how traditional cultures can be transformed into art forms with new meaning and acceptance in this current age. It is a model that can be emulated by other art forms.

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Biography

Wang Xiaowei is a Ph.D. student in ethnomusicology at the Philippine Women's University. He is currently an associate professor at the Chu Zhou University Conservatory of Music in China, mainly engaged in composition teaching and choir conducting. He is also one of the

main persons in charge of the inheritance base of Chinese excellent traditional culture (Fengyang Huagu) in the national colleges and universities. He has a master's degree in composition theory and teaching research.

Choral Singing in the Philippines during the Pandemic: Articulating the Influencing Reciprocity Between Music and Society

Robert Delgado

Office of Graduate Programs, College of Music University of the Philippines
M348+R47, Osmeña Avenue Diliman, Quezon City 1101 Metro Manila Philippines
e-mail: robert.delgado@upd.edu.ph

Abstract

The pandemic caused by the Corona virus in 2020 has triggered Philippine president Rodrigo Duterte to enforce a lockdown in the country on March 16. The imposed community quarantine caused a major shut down on transportation, businesses, and formal and informal gatherings. On March 26, a news showing a virtual choir performance that went viral on social media featured a group of doctors paying tribute to their colleagues who died due to the infection. Since then, choral groups throughout the nation followed suit and created virtual performances and related. This then begs the question of how choral groups developed their prolific presence in the Philippine society and how they were able to manifest an immediate response to the crisis as their social contribution in easing the terror of the pandemic. The paper then examines the choral movements that occurred in the past. The processual systems and the stratification represented by the micro-macro social structures inherent to these movements were analyzed reflecting on the different sociological and cultural theories such as the “production-of-culture” by Richard Peterson, “arts-world perspective” by Howard Becker, rationalization theory by Max Weber, and the “field theory” by Pierre Bourdieu. This system-structure relationship that influenced choral singing has catapulted choral groups to articulate their influence in the society as witnessed during the pandemic; thus, articulating the influencing reciprocity between society and music. This study targets future researchers and policy-makers in looking into the role of the performing arts in shaping the societal fabric of their community.

Keywords: choral singing, pandemic, Philippine society, socio-musicology

Introduction

The spread of the COVID19 virus in the Philippines, in its initial stages, alarmed the whole country. By March 16, 2020, there had been 76 reported new cases of the infected, totaling 140 confirmed cases, including 12 deaths; and the number kept rising by the day. The Philippines, under the administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, declared the whole Philippines under a State of Calamity for a period of six months from March 16, 2020 by imposing an Enhanced Community Quarantine

(ECQ) throughout the island of Luzon, including Metro Manila. Apart from the imposition, it has engaged seventeen government agencies to provide details and guidelines of the ECQ in their respective bureaus. This has caused private and public companies, religious organizations, local government units to limit their workforce and were advised to refrain from face-to-face meetings and activities. That warrants the ceasing operations of choral groups in the whole country that led choral conductors, such as myself, to be out of work for an indefinite time.

Choral groups have its prolific presence in Philippine society. Religious organizations, private and public companies, schools and universities, and even local communities have an organized group of singers that are tasked to sing in their respective events. Choral competitions and festivals catering to the different classifications of choirs are regularly organized in the different parts of the country. There are choral competitions for the different religious organizations, school and university choirs, private companies and government agencies, and even community choirs; from local up to the provincial government units. In the age of social media, concerts and performances of choral groups have been posted for everyone to watch. All of these had to stop, as imposed and enforced by the national government, when the spread of the corona virus became widespread. However, the news that showed “individual recordings from each of the 21 doctors in the video – all of which are alumni of the official choir group of the University of the Philippines College of Medicine – stitched together to create a moving cover of the inspiring hymn” (ABS-CBN News, 2020). This has impacted the lives of the whole choral community in the country and this had motivated them to create their own virtual activities as their contribution to society in alleviating the trauma that the country had been experiencing. I, for one, had been advised by my company choir to come up with our own virtual recording to allay the scare that the employees faced when working outside the comforts of their offices. My choir, along with other choirs, started to broadcast a weekly podcast published in social media that talks about the different narratives of choral practitioners in the country. Moreover, the yearly organization of the MADZ et al, a festival participated in by the past conductors and students of the Madrigal Singers, became virtual instead of the live concerts it staged. These activities were manifested by the prolific presence of choral singing in Philippine society that articulated their influence in the Philippine societal fabric by easing the tension brought by the pandemic.

Choral singing has been part of the tradition in the Philippines since the pre-colonial times. However, it does not mean that the tradition of community singing was not practiced prior to the colonization. Nevertheless, it was the Spanish colonizers who introduced the “western” practice and they imposed its role in responding to the church services of the Roman Catholic Church. Not until the Presidential Proclamation No. 1173 that established the National Music Competitions for Young Artists (NAMCYA) in 1972 by the late Ferdinand Marcos; primary, secondary, and college schools, including family singing groups were encouraged to participate in this yearly music competitions. I was only ten years old when introduced to this music-making. When our school’s primary choir participated in this contest, little did I know that this has impacted my life to a point that I will be involved in choral singing for the rest of my life. Be that as it may, the process of choral music making passed

through several processes of relational systems that involved several institutions of society. The macro-representation, the national government cultural policy as mentioned, is one. However, it did not end there. The cultural policy has engaged the then Department of Education and Culture (DEC), now Department of Education to collaborate in the process. The directive stated that the DEC would encourage its member schools to participate and initiate the different stages of the competitions to look for deserving representatives from the different regions of the country that would compete in the national finals. Our school and family were also involved in this process. On the one hand, the school provided the fringe support to the choir, especially our group had passed through the different stages and went on to represent the region in the finals. They would provide food and snack, uniform, transportation, and even extra credits to the members of the choir. After all, it is a pride of the school within its community to produce such winning choirs. On the other hand, the family provided emotional and psychological support to each member of the group. This support according to Brand (Dell et al, 2014-15) includes parental attitude towards the involvement of the child in musical activities, parental attendance in the child's musical performances, ownership of musical materials and providing early education, and participation of the parent in the music-making activities. In Philippine society, not only the parent-child relationship is heeded but also the conductor-member is formed as the extension of family. If the teacher serves as the second parent of the child outside the homes, it is also apparent for the kind of relationship between the conductor and its members. This illuminates what Virginia Miralao (1997, p.194) asserts that due to the security and protection provided by the families, Filipinos tend to recreate "family-like" or primary types of relationship outside the family. These social structures, such as the family, school, national government, and the engaged government agencies, are part of the 'network analysis', a term postulated by H.C. White (Santoro, 2015) that reflects the perspective as formulated by Richard Peterson (Santoro, 2015) coined as the 'production-of-culture' perspective. According to Santoro, 'production-of-culture' is described as a creative application of organizational theory, institutional economics, and network analysis to the study of cultural practices such as choral singing. Furthermore, the 'production-of-culture' perspective's six-facets model, also delineated by Peterson, is identified to be relevant in the process of cultural production. These include law and regulation, technology, industrial structure of field, organizational structure, occupational careers, and the consumer market. All of these elements are reflected in the choral music-making process I had mentioned above.

Another relevant choral event in the past is the organization of the local government unit of a city-wide choral competition. This time, the different barangays of the city are encouraged to participate. As a family of musicians, we were tapped by our barangay to lead in the music-making. Auditioning for the members of the choir that would represent our community was not difficult since the barangay houses a Roman Catholic church that has several voluntary choirs that serves its masses or worship services. Comparing it to the NAMCYA competition that I was also engaged, I observed a more intimate kind of relationship being espoused in this "musicking" (Small, 1998). Instead of institutions, individual members of the barangay with different kinds of professions contributed to the whole process. Apart from our family

that provided the musical training, we out-sourced people who would provide the food, venue of the rehearsals, sponsors for the costumes, designers, choreographer, transportation, and those extra people who would construct hand props needed for our participation; all of which were part of the community or the *barangay*. In this process of music-making, a different dimension of sociological stratification is illustrated. This approach reflects Howard Becker's 'Art world.' This was based on Becker's seminal book entitled 'Arts World.' (Becker, 2008) Becker's approach to the sociology of art comes from the well-known Chicago sociological thought as referred to 'symbolic interactionism,' which Marco Santoro cited as the "centrality of meaning and of human interaction in the social fabric." Focusing on the various forms of work is an essential ingredient in the study of music-making in the art world approach. In this illustration, the relational structure centers on the different contributions of individuals, not only in terms of musical value but also non-musical values.

When I was a college student, a business organization, the Clearing Officers Club, Inc., engaged me to arrange a contest piece that would be used in their organization-sponsored choral competition, namely the COCI Inter-bank choral Competition. I was commissioned to do the contest pieces from 1987 to 1988. This is a kind of choral activity where each participating choir is part of the bureaucratic structure of a business organization. Members of the choir who are part of the rank-in-file employees of the business organization get incentives being members of the group. They either get additional cash allowance per rehearsal, remuneration on over-time during rehearsals, free uniforms, and others as provided by their human resources department. The members get to meet the officials of the bank including the chief executive officer vis-à-vis when the former gets to perform for important corporate events, which an ordinary employee would never get to experience. The officials of the bank, on the other hand, are always proud of the achievements of their choir as the latter acts as company's Ambassadors of Goodwill in music. Apart from representing the company in industry-wide events such as the competition, the group gets to perform for corporate events of the company. This relational social structure of choral singing reflects the bureaucratic or the rational-legal model, a theory developed by German scholar, Max Weber. Based on Weber's principles of bureaucracy, the music-making of company choirs also follows the same principles (Weber, 2019); (a) The choir has specialized role, albeit non-functional, (b) Recruitment based on the musical and singing skills of the individual, (c) members are subject to conduct to strict rules of discipline and control, (d) Hierarchy of the members are based on the singing ability, musical knowledge. Usually, hierarchy are based on the capacity to do solo singing and lead a certain section of the choir, (e) music-making are not based on personal attachment of the conductor and the member, and (f) political neutrality of the choir to office disputes. Since business organizations exist due to the concept of capitalization or economic development, company choirs are only an optional part of the structure. It can exist or not exist based on the direction given by the officials of the organization.

Towards the last decades of the twentieth century, choral groups coming from the different social structures of the society had been established, mostly for the purpose of singing in their respective events and in some cases, participating in local competitions and festivals including the ones mentioned above. In 1989, the

Philippine Madrigal Singers, where I was a part of, created a sensational news among choral groups when it won all the five major European choral competitions it joined, totaling more than twenty laureate prizes. Since then, awareness for choral singing has sprouted and developed in the country. More choral enthusiasts, private and public institutions, communities organized their own groups. The outreach programs of the Madrigal Singers gathered more spectators every time the group performed for regional audiences. Cultural agencies and private producers of culture engaged choral groups in their programs and policies. More importantly, existing choral groups emulated the feats of the Madrigal Singers by participating and winning in international choral competitions. Until recently, a multitude of choral groups try to emulate the Madrigal Singers in its choral sound, musical interpretation, and system of developing its singers. This is reflective of what Bourdieu determines as the hierarchy of the field. Those below the dominant sector tries to emulate the ones above it (Bourdieu, 1996). This has led to creating an imagined community of choral groups wherein each unit moves within a certain kind of field. Pierre Bourdieu defines this space or network of interaction in his 'field theory' (Bourdieu, 2020). The choral movement in the Philippines has expanded its activities by organizing seminars, workshops, staging international choral competitions, and most importantly, the organization of the Philippine Choral Directors Association (PCDA). PCDA was established to bring together young and new choral conductors to get the latest updates in choral music. On a different space in the field, the Philippine Madrigal Singers continues to be in the upper echelon since it continues to win in international competitions, receive international awards; furthermore, they continue to be engaged by cultural agencies in the country by bringing its singers and alumni to far-flung areas of the country to facilitate workshops, choral sessions to local choral groups.

These processual systems have been inherent on the stratification as represented by the micro-macro social structures that without the value of these institutions, the proliferation of choral singing will not be realized. Thus, choral singing has become imbedded and intertwined with the social structures that serve as its support and foundation; where, these social structures that form the social fabric of a community affect the music-making of choral singing. This is related to the cultural study of "scene theory," a conceptual framework known to have been firstly cited by Will Straw (Bennett, 2015) and the 'garden culture' ascribed by Ernest Gellner (Gellner, 1983). On the one hand, 'scenes' often transcend particular communities that reflect and actualize a state of relationship between social groups within the community and coalesce with a certain style of music; and on the other hand, garden cultures are ascribed to a culture where it is divided into savage and cultivated varieties. Both of these metaphors articulate a Bourdieusian field where a notion of space of interaction among key players of a certain industry occurs. It is also a network analysis that accounts for the power structure of a processual system. In the next page, it shows an illustration of the conceptual framework of this postulation (see Figure 1) where a garden (or a landscape) is a metaphor of a field of cultural production where social structures play an immanent role in the music-making while the forces of struggles and forces of power are motivations that make the process of production either thrive or wither. The diagram shows a garden/landscape (Feliciano, 2022) sketch articulating a field where trees, shrubs, and plants and other botanical

elements represent the network of choirs and choral singing with the social structures attached to them as their support and foundation. The varieties of social structures, e.g. the density of the trunks, branch, and twigs are embraced by land, air, and clouds that symbolize the forces of power and struggles that make these cultural objects either thrive or wither. Some botanical elements are situated on the upper echelon of the field where they dominate the landscape while the other elements are on the lower position where they subordinate. These elements are all interconnected and have their position-takings within the field.

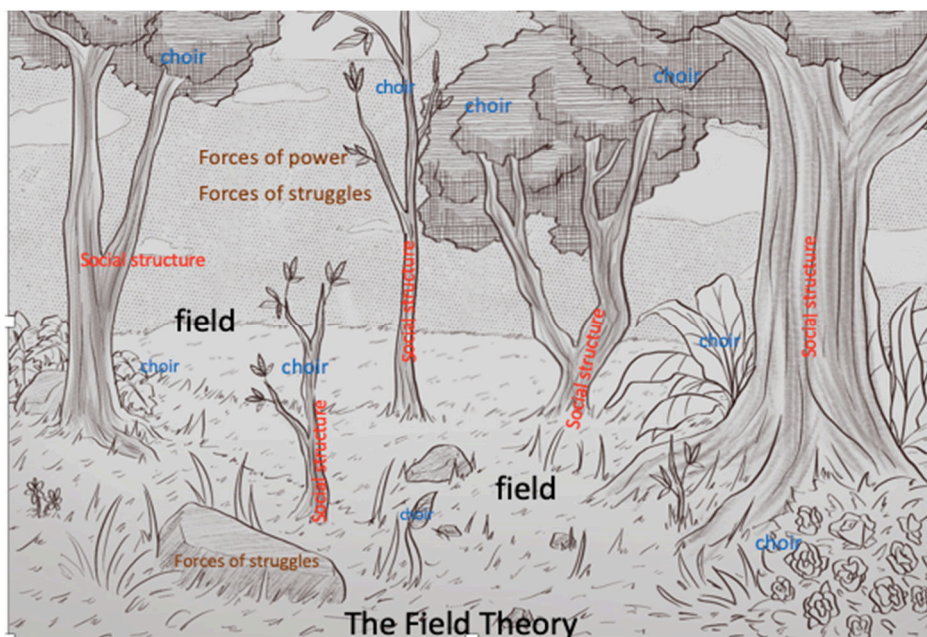


Figure 1. A conceptual framework of the field theory of choral singing.

Conclusion

By far, this study has illustrated selected events in Philippine society that were responsible for the processual system of choral music-making that occurred in the past. However, there are more of these events that served as the forces, along with the relational value contributed by the different societal structures of the society, proliferated choral singing in Philippine society of the twentieth century. Nonetheless, the prolific presence of choral groups in the country has catapulted these choirs to raise their voices and be active in the community in responding to certain crises that strike the country. Several choral concerts were held to help raise funds in the rehabilitation of the victims affected by the typhoon Ondoy (Ketsana), one of the most devastating typhoons that hit the country in 2009. On August 13, 2011, Cebu-based choral groups held a fund-raising concert to raise funds for the Child Wish Ministry, a non-profit organization that provides assistance to impoverished school children all over the country. And recently, the virtual choir recording that went viral as initiated

by the official choir of the UP College of Medicine has proven this point. They did not just advocate the upliftment of the spirits of their colleagues who had to witness the deaths of co-medical front liners on top of the hundreds of patients that they had to take care of, they also used choral singing as a tool for therapy as they serenade hospital patients during their free time. What made this story remarkable is the immediate response of choral groups to the societal crisis; and also, the passion of these choirs to contribute to the society despite the risk they faced during the time of the pandemic. This asserts that not only did society become responsible for the proliferation of choral music in Philippine societal fabric; but also, choral singing has made its impact to the society, especially in times of crisis. This phenomenon reflects how both Max Weber and Theodor Adorno analyses the influencing reciprocation between music and society (Turley, 2001).

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Biography

Robert M. Delgado, MPA studied Music Composition and Voice at the UP College of Music in 1983. As a student, he joined the Philippine Madrigal Singers and served as one of its resident arrangers. He left the group in 1992 and engaged himself in choral music; particularly, handling choral groups, spearheading international tours, competitions, and festivals. He was also invited as a choral clinician, jury in competitions, workshops, and other choral events in and out of the country. Apart from the choral idiom, he has done musical arrangements and compositions for films, live shows, recordings, and state events. Recently, he has been listed in the CCP Encyclopedia of Philippine Art, a repository of who's who in the field of arts in the country. Also, he is a member of the Music Committee of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. He has obtained a master's degree and some doctoral units in Public Administration, and is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Music at the University of the Philippines. As a practitioner of choral music for more than thirty years in the country, he focuses his field of study on arts and cultural policies and the sociology of choral singing.

The Chinese Bamboo Flute Fingering Sequence Theory

Yang Chao¹, Camellia Siti Maya Mohamed Razali²

Faculty of Human Ecology, Universiti Putra Malaysia

43400 UPM Serdang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

e-mail: gs60184@student.upm.edu.my¹, camellia@upm.edu.my²

Abstract

The “fingering sequence” is a rather special concept, which is more often classified as a musical act or practice. There is no clear description or definition of fingering sequences. However, when people want to use it to express the idea of playing certain instruments, there seems to be a consensus that it is a combination of fingerings played on the musical instrument. This is somewhat arbitrary, as some people equate the concept of ‘fingering sequence’ with that of ‘fingering,’ which is clearly not the same thing. This paper reviews the existing concept of fingering sequence. In the meantime, by comparing the quantitative methods of the fingering sequence theory of erhu, the basis and fundamental principles of the quantitative methods of the fingering sequence theory of bamboo flute are put forward.

Keywords: Chinese bamboo flute, fingering sequence, quantitative method

Introduction

In the 20th century, Chinese bamboo flute music has gradually entered the academic attribute from the folk attribute under the influence of western music thinking. This led not only to the loss of what is known as the traditional nature of the bamboo flute, but also to the fact that the theory of the bamboo flute lagged behind the development of Chinese ethnomusicological theory. At present, the research on bamboo flute is roughly divided into three categories; performance skills, culture, and musical instrument manufacturing. According to statistics on the current amount and themes of Chinese literature, the research on “performance skills” is the most, the research on “culture” is less, and the research on “musical instrument manufacturing” is the least. Currently, Chinese music researchers follow a Western approach to the analysis of bamboo flute performance techniques. This approach is not only single but also devoid of any distinctive features. Therefore, in order to find an analysis method that can match bamboo flute music, we must consider this problem from the musical instrument itself.

In the study of Chinese folk instruments, the concept of ‘fingering sequences’ is often used, with more mature theoretical results in erhu and guzheng music theory, especially in erhu. Unfortunately, the term ‘fingering sequence’ is still undefined in bamboo flute music theory, and although some researchers use this term, they have

not been able to clarify the fingering sequence of the bamboo flute in the same way as in erhu music theory. In view of this situation, this paper refers to the concept and quantification method of fingering sequence of Erhu, tries to put forward the conceive of fingering sequence theory of the Chinese bamboo flute, and considers fingering sequence except melody from the perspective of music morphology.

Interpretation of Concepts

In China, the term “fingering sequence” was first seen in erhu performances and was proposed by Song (1982). He defined “fingering sequence” as the combination of fingers (four fingers on the left hand and open strings) pressing the strings when playing the erhu, mainly from the combination of two to four fingers. After arrangement, there are a total of 60 combinations. On this basis, Guo (2019) first summarized Song’s theory of erhu’s fingering sequence, and listed 60 arrangements one by one according to Song’s fingering sequence theory. Later, she named the fingering sequence proposed by Song as the basic fingering sequence, and developed the phonetic fingering sequence, the transposition fingering sequence and the combination fingering sequence. However, Song and Guo’s research is only a kind of basic research, even if the latter two types of fingering sequence developed by Guo based on the ever-developing composing technique, it only details the basic patterns of finger combination in erhu performance. Perhaps Song and Guo were influenced by Liu Dehai’s etudes, so the discussion between Song and Guo on the order of the fingers was based on unit beats, ignoring the fact that the fingers were always moving during the performance of the music.

In the theory of guzheng music, there is also the concept of “fingering sequence,” which was first proposed by Zhao (2001). Although he listed various finger movement patterns when playing guzheng in the book, he did not give a detailed definition of the finger sequence. However, from his description, it can be found that he has the same understanding of the order of signs as Song.

In the theory of bamboo flute music, the concept of fingering sequences is obviously not taken seriously. Li (2016) mentioned the sequence of fingers in the study of bamboo flute music, but he equated the concept of “fingering sequence” with “fingering.” He simply believes that “fingering sequence” is a fingering of a single tone, which is the same as the concept of “finger” in actual teaching. And Xie (2014) also used the concept of fingering sequence in her thesis. Although she did not confuse the concept of “fingering sequence” with “fingering,” she only vaguely explained the concept of “fingering sequence” and did not address it. To define it, it can only barely be understood as a way of finger movement. Xie’s understanding of the fingering sequence comes from Xu (2011). Xu was the first to use the concept of finger sequence in the bamboo flute etudes, and like others, he did not make a definition of “fingering sequence.” What is even more regrettable is that Xu only used “fingering sequence” on the cover of his book, and the contents of the book did not mention this concept anymore. Perhaps Xu also confuses “fingering sequence” with “fingering,” or even “skill.”

Fingering Research in Another Field. Research into the fingering of

musical instruments also exists in the field of engineering (e.g. computer science). In contrast to the approach of musicologists, scientists in engineering do not focus on the external factors that influence fingering, such as ethnicity, culture, ideas and customs, but rather on how different algorithms can be used to automatically generate and ultimately optimise fingering. The object of these scientists' research will always focus more on piano playing, probably because of the high popularity of the piano (Yuan, 2020). Since there are multiple forms of fingering combinations in the playing of any piano melody (Parncutt, 1997), the different fingering combinations are accompanied by issues such as whether they are reasonable or not; at the same time, the choice of different fingers for different notes when playing the piano also determines the difficulty of the player when playing the piano. This is why scientists have used various models, functions and algorithms to find the most reasonable piano fingering (Yonebayashi, 2007). Li et al. (2020) point out that there are currently three approaches in the field regarding the automatic marking and generation of piano fingering: rule-based approaches, statistical learning-based approaches and deep learning-based approaches. Either approach requires the creation of a complex and constantly revised system, and studies like the one by Li et al. only improve on the Hidden Markov Model (HMM) and the Viterbi algorithm.

How to derive the appropriate fingering from the melody is the challenge that engineering scientists want to solve. At this point, a musical score may be just two sequences for them: a sequence of notes and a sequence of fingering. Through our perception of these two, the note sequence is explicit and the fingering sequence is implicit. In piano playing, the note sequence corresponds directly to the keys of the piano, which are a visual representation of the actual pitch. However, fingering as an implicit sequence cannot be matched exactly to the key position and the actual pitch, because of the influence of the musical melody on the fingering sequence, resulting in different combinations of fingering sequences for the same melody. For this reason, scientists have studied fingering sequences with the aim of obtaining optimised, rational fingering sequences, allowing the computer to learn the logic of piano playing and to algorithmically produce an optimal set or sets of fingering sequences.

In short, scientists have studied piano fingering with the aim of explaining why certain fingering patterns are dominant in piano playing (Parncutt, 1997). This explanation is given in the form of rational quantitative results, which do not involve any other factors than the fingering itself.

Quantification Methods for Erhu Fingering Sequences. The quantification of fingering sequences has long been proposed as a teaching idea by Song (1982) in *The Art of Erhu Performance*. According to Song's theory, the fingering sequence is the form of the arrangement between the four fingers of the left hand and the open strings of the erhu, which is the basis for the learner's practice of the erhu. Although Song did not develop a theory about fingering sequences, he still listed three basic combinations of each. This combination has an inherent mathematical principle (Chen, 2009). According to Song's saying of fingering sequences, a fingering sequence is the order in which the fingers of the left hand press the strings when playing the erhu. He marked the index, middle, ring and little fingers of the left hand as 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively (Figure 1). In fact, the open string of the

erhu was also considered as a finger in his theory, but he did not mark the open string. Perhaps this is the reason why Guo (2019) only considered the four fingers of the left hand and not the open string in her dissertation. Therefore, in order to restore Song's theory of fingering sequences, the open string of the erhu will be marked as 0.

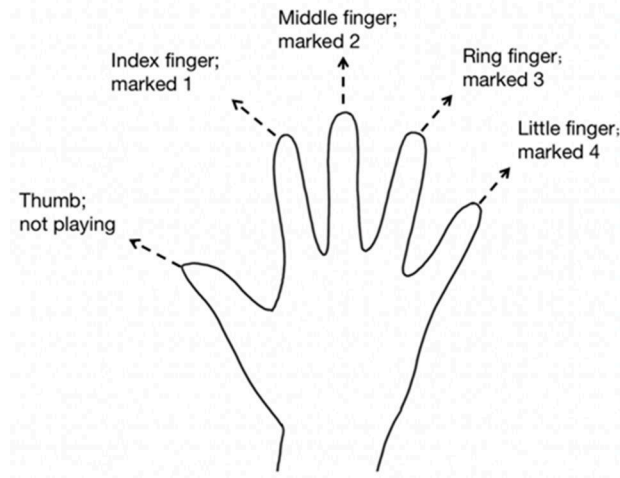


Figure 1. The way the fingers of the left hand are marked.

Song did not directly list the various combinations and variations of fingering sequences, but according to his theory, there are three types of fingering sequences in the erhu: a combination of two-finger fingering sequences, a combination of three-finger fingering sequences and combination of four-finger fingering sequences. By marking the four fingers of the left hand with the open string, the different fingering sequences can be represented numerically. For example, in the combination of two finger fingering sequences, the prototypes are (0, 1), (0, 2), (0, 3), (0, 4) and the variants are (1, 0), (2, 0), (3, 0) and (4, 0) when each of the four fingers is in contact with the open string. For example, in Combination of three finger fingering sequences, the prototypes for are: (0, 1, 2), (0, 2, 3), (0, 3, 4), and the variants are: (0, 2, 1), (1, 0, 2), (1, 2, 0), (2, 0, 1) ... when two pairs of adjacent fingers in contact with the open string.

Ideas for The Quantification of Bamboo Flute Fingering Sequences. The fingering sequence of the Chinese bamboo flute mainly comes from the opening and closing number of finger holes during music performance. Unlike the fingering thinking of the erhu, in bamboo flute playing one finger corresponds to only one finger hole (Figure 2). This relationship is fixed and absolute. However, this situation of one finger to one fingerhole is absolutely non-existent in the erhu. Therefore, the bamboo flute fingering sequence is not concerned with the various combinations of permutations, but with the number of fingerholes opening and closing.

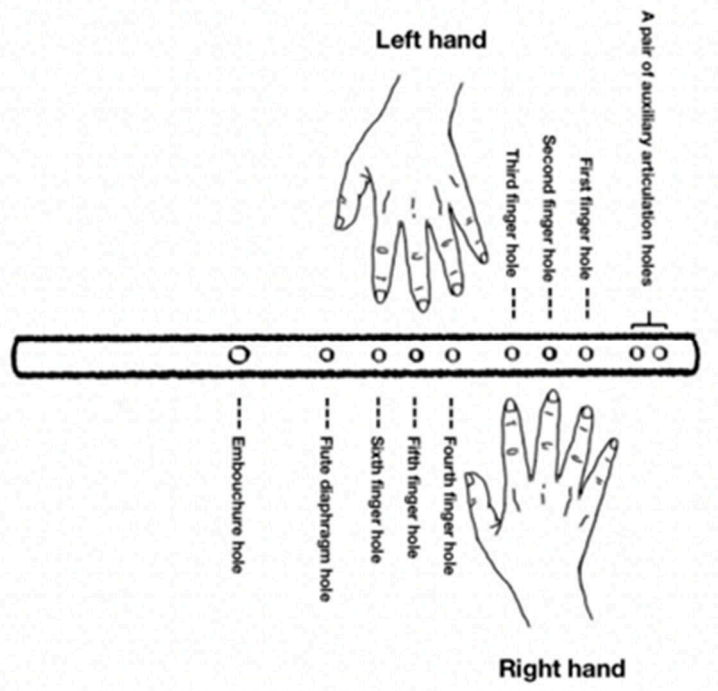


Figure 2. Correspondence between fingers and finger holes.

The Relationship of Fingering Sequence and Musical Morphology.

According to Meriam's model, western researchers are more willing to summarize the research related to fingering into "musical behavior." After studying the relationship between the Butembo flute and the human body, Blacking (1995) found that the melody sequence is determined by the fingering pattern and the blowing pattern. Influenced by Blacking's research, when Baily (1995) studied dutar (3 and 14 strings), the fingering sequence of the left hand and the rhythmic pattern of the right hand were the basis for what he called a "natural" movement pattern:

1. Non-linguistic movement patterns are part of a particular culture.
2. The structural concept of traditional music will be expressed through the spatial layout of the lute type.
3. Through three comparison groups, Baily found the fingering sequence pattern of the left hand.

In this study, Baily also believes that changes in the left fingering sequence would affect the compatibility of music. This means that musical morphology is greatly influenced by fingering and instruments. In addition to thinking about existing musical patterns, composers also take this factor into account when conceiving music. Humet (2007) analyzed the musical characteristics of shakuhachi when composing for shakuhachi. He believed that the structure of the instrument determined the

characteristics of the shakuhachi fingering so that the morphology of shakuhachi music could not be flexible.

Conclusion

This idea of fingering sequence theory of bamboo flute is based on the objective finger movement (opening and closing of finger holes) in bamboo flute performance, but no one has systematically studied the fingering sequence theory of bamboo flute at present. By referring to the fingering sequence theory of Erhu, especially in the quantization method, the fingering sequence quantization method of bamboo flute will be more fixed and convenient. In addition, the relationship between fingering sequence and musical form also shows that musical form is not a factor of melody, and any part involved in musical performance can become an analytical element of musical form. The analysis method of Chinese bamboo flute music is monotonous because it follows the Western analysis method, and completely loses the logical language of this instrument itself. Fingering sequence exists in any musical instrument, and it will generate unique and specific theories due to the structure and playing methods of different musical instruments, just as the quantification methods of fingering sequence of erhu and bamboo flute are different. Fingering sequence is a kind of musical instrument language that needs to be deeply explored. It must be combined with one or a kind of musical instrument. At present, Chinese bamboo flute music always takes the external factors as the object of observation and analysis, but ignores the internal observation of itself. Therefore, the idea of finger sequence theory of bamboo flute is to explore the internal musical instrument language of bamboo flute, and also to put forward a new analysis method based on its own musical instrument language for the analysis of Chinese bamboo flute music.

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Wind Bands and Orchestras in the Greater Manila Area in the Time of COVID-19

Crystal Milarose Rodis-Concepcion
University of the Philippines College of Music
Diliman, Quezon City
e-mail: cyrodisconcepcion@up.edu.ph

Abstract

This paper will examine how the wind bands and orchestras in the Philippines' Greater Manila Area were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Philippines had one of the strictest and most prolonged lockdowns in the world, which greatly affected musical life. In order to continue making music, large instrumental ensembles had to adapt by utilizing online platforms in different ways. This paper will explore how several groups approached these challenges. Four orchestras will be examined, each with a different nature: a state-funded orchestra, an orchestra belonging to a non-profit organization, a youth orchestra and a university-based community orchestra. While wind bands, which are largely community-based, did not actively stage virtual performances, the biggest wind band competition in the Philippines fully utilized the online medium, enabling it to further expand. This paper will explore the changes these organizations have undergone to be able to continue despite the uncertainty of a pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, orchestra, wind band

Introduction

Metropolitan Manila, or Metro Manila, refers to the National Capital Region of the Philippines. Before the COVID-19 pandemic struck the world in 2020, the region had a bustling art and musical scene with concerts, musicals and ballets. It had many active artistic groups and was home to the only three salaried symphony orchestras in the country. In addition to these, there were also a handful of other orchestras of different natures. These orchestras had regular concert schedules that kept musicians busy.

The four surrounding provinces of Metro Manila, namely, Laguna, Cavite, Rizal, Bulacan, are referred to as the Greater Manila Area. Among these provinces exist an active community band culture. But all these came to a halt with the lockdowns imposed on March 2020 in an attempt to curb the COVID-19 virus. What was initially a two-week lockdown dragged on for two years with varying intensities. The Greater Manila Area, which was designated as NCR+, felt the brunt of it. As mass gatherings were prohibited, live performances were one of the last activities to

be allowed. These instrumental ensembles still wanted to somehow continue making music, and the only way to do it was to change the mode of delivery. Musicians needed to adapt by learning how to take advantage of online platforms and record their parts individually if needed. The next sections will explore how different groups managed.

Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra

The Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) is the national orchestra of the country. It is the resident orchestra of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP). As the name implies, it is the seat of art and culture of the country. The PPO is fully state-funded, the only orchestra in the country with this privilege. The members, then, continued to receive their full salaries throughout the pandemic, making it one of the few artistic groups who did not lose their jobs during the pandemic.

However, there was still a need to be productive and continue to make music. PPO used this opportunity to reach out and educate more people about music by launching different series on their Facebook page and was also shown in CCP's YouTube page. First was the PPO Instrument Petting Zoo, wherein members introduced different orchestral instruments in an effort to boost music appreciation. They also introduced a series of virtual pocket concerts featuring PPO members performing in their own home. Entitled "Music for Healing: PPO in Quarantine," they marketed these concerts as a form of music therapy. "The pandemic may keep us apart but the power of music will bring us together, keep us connected and help us heal" (Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, 2020). Initially, these concerts featured individual members only, but eventually included chamber performances that were individually recorded and combined. These concerts usually featured light classical music, pop music and Original Pilipino Music (OPM).

As lockdowns became more lenient, it became possible for PPO members to travel to CCP. With group gatherings still prohibited, PPO launched its Chamber Music Series, with two to four musicians recording at a time, and later on, the PPO Recital Series, wherein mostly principal players of the orchestra gave solo recitals. The music played in these virtual concerts were more serious than the initial "PPO in Quarantine" series, yet the concerts continued to get a few thousand views, a far greater number than the live audience of PPO concerts before the pandemic (Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, 2020). Additionally, they gave the musicians a chance to learn more chamber and solo repertoire and to be individually showcased.

After one and a half years, the PPO finally had its first recording as a full orchestra at the newly renovated Metropolitan Theater. It was later streamed at the Met's Facebook page. On December 2021, just in time for Christmas, the PPO had its first live concert at the Philippine Post Office, making it the first orchestra to have a live concert since the onset of the pandemic (Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, 2021). The performance was livestreamed on Facebook. An eagerly anticipated event, it received ninety-seven thousand views (as of August 2022), making it the most watched video of the orchestra's Facebook page. Since then, they have resumed performing more regularly, many of which are livestreamed and receive tens of thousands of views. The PPO, then, was able to reach a far wider audience than ever

before.

Manila Symphony Orchestra. The Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO) is the oldest orchestra in the Philippines. It is part of a bigger foundation, the Manila Symphony Orchestra Foundation, along with its youth orchestra, the Manila Symphony Junior Orchestra (MSJO) and the Manila Symphony Orchestra Music Academy. The MSO is a salaried orchestra. The income of the musicians come from the combination of ticket sales of concerts, the generated income of the music academy, and private engagements and sponsorship. When the lockdowns started, all of MSO's activities ceased along with the rest of the country. However, the orchestra continued to receive their full salaries until May 2020, two months after the start of the lockdown. But then, it became apparent that normal life would not resume anytime soon. With the loss of sponsorships and no engagements, the orchestra ceased to receive their monthly salary after the month of May (J. Solares, personal communication, March 3, 2022). Some of the members are also teachers at the music academy. The academy's shift to virtual lessons led to an increase in the number of students, which financially sustained the faculty. Some of the members have other jobs outside MSO such as music teachers and members of municipal bands. However, some of those who do not teach at the academy had to augment their income by taking on non-music-related jobs (J. Solares, personal communication, March 3, 2022).

Little by little, MSO started to perform virtually again, even continuing their well-attended Ayala Museum Rush Hour Series, their concert series with usually not-so-serious music. At first, they individually recorded their parts at home and then was later on combined digitally, but then moved on to doing full orchestra recordings. They were also active on Facebook, and took this time to also individually highlight their members with short introductory videos, and also produced short chamber music performances (Manila Symphony Orchestra, 2020). The MSO during the pandemic became an on-call orchestra, and members were paid on a per-engagement basis. One of the highlights of the MSO in 2021 was its performance during the inauguration of the Manila Metropolitan Theater or the "Met," in December 2021. This is a momentous occasion for the orchestra, having performed during the original opening of the Met in 1931, and then again during its restoration in 1979, during which it became the resident orchestra of the theater (Manila Symphony Orchestra, 2021). It was also the orchestra's first time performing in front of an audience since the start of the lockdown. It also performed during the inauguration of a new theater, the Samsung Hall in July 2022.

Last September, the MSO finally performed a live concert for the Ayala Museum Rush Hour Series with a rehash of one of their popular concert themes, "Video Games Symphonic," featuring classic video game music. The tickets for the live concert were sold out. Additionally, MSO offered two other modes of viewership: a screen view mode wherein audiences outside the venue can view the concert through a screen setup, and a virtual mode where audiences can watch through their own devices via Zoom (Manila Symphony Orchestra, 2022). Even with the resumption of live concerts, MSO is continuing this blended mode of patronage for its Ayala Museum Rush Hour concerts. Gradually, as the MSO books more engagements, it hopes to get back to being a salaried orchestra.

University of the Philippines Orchestra. The University of the Philippines Symphony Orchestra (UPSO) was organized in 2018 as the community orchestra of the University of the Philippines (UP) System. The orchestra is based in the College of Music in UP Diliman (the only College of Music in the entire UP system). Its members not only consist of faculty, alumni and students of the College of Music, but also of non-music majors and faculty from UP Manila and UP Los Banos, with a commute ranging from one to four hours for a one-way trip.

The UPSO remained active throughout the pandemic, as it did not lose its funding from UP. It is the only orchestra to consistently do full orchestra virtual recordings during the lockdown, commonly referred to as a “video collage,” wherein the musicians recorded individually and then these recordings were edited together to become one full orchestra. UPSO focused on works that spoke directly to the Filipino audiences. Its first virtual project was in April 2020 called “Maghintay Lang” (translated as ‘Just Wait’). Music director, Josefino “Chino” Toledo, took the text of Psalm 46 and set it into the music of Jean Sibelius’ “Finlandia.” It encouraged the listeners to stay strong amidst the pandemic (Go, 2022).

As the lockdowns continued, it became clear that normal life would not resume soon. During the lockdowns, UPSO was able to mount two online concert seasons on Facebook and Youtube, with each concert having a message to the audience. It attempted to be more engaging by using video footage to enhance the storytelling aspect. The pandemic, despite its limitations, also had some advantages. Because of the online concerts, UPSO was finally able to achieve its goal during the Christmas concert of 2021 to have performing groups from all eight constituent universities perform in one virtual stage (Go, 2022).

Mounting online concerts is no easy feat—the process is much longer than producing a live concert. For UPSO, it takes about four to five months. Once the program is decided, it takes about one month to produce the click tracks that the orchestra will record along with. Toledo then holds virtual “rehearsals,” dividing the orchestra into strings and winds. Here, he discusses the music in detail and gives specific instructions to individual musicians. The musicians are given about a month to individually record their parts. All of the individual files are due one month before the streaming date. UPSO produced a total of fourteen virtual season concerts, keeping the members busy throughout the pandemic. By June 12, 2022 UPSO held its first live concert in more than two years, during the Philippine Independence Day. As Manila has eased its restrictions, UPSO plans to go back to doing live concerts. However, during this time of transition wherein live audiences are not yet back to their pre-pandemic numbers yet orchestras are now allowed to rehearse altogether, UPSO will use this time to produce recordings of Filipino works (B. Go, personal communication, September 11, 2022).

Orchestra of the Filipino Youth. The Orchestra of the Filipino Youth (OFY) is the performing arm of *Ang Misyon* (translated as ‘The Mission’). It is a youth orchestra inspired by the Valenzuela program El Sistema, which promotes music as an instrument for social change. The decade-old orchestra was funded by ABS-CBN, a media conglomerate and First Philippine Holdings, Inc (Ang Misyon,

n.d.) Both are subsidiaries of the Lopez Holdings Corporation. Through these fundings, students receive free music lessons. When the lockdowns started, OFY ceased all activities. It suffered a major blow when, in July 2020, during the height of the pandemic, ABS-CBN lost its franchise. Thousands of employees lost their jobs, including its professional orchestra, the ABS-CBN Philharmonic Orchestra. The loss of ABS-CBN resulted in a 50% reduction in *Ang Misyon*'s budget. This resulted in many budget cuts including lessening the number of scholars. OFY resumed its activities in March 2021, one year after the lockdowns started. Instead of doing virtual performances, it focused on developing the individual musicians by having one-on-one virtual lessons with their mentors. Lessons focused on fundamental skills and solo repertoire. It also organized a series of masterclasses from foreign artists from the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra and the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra.

It was not until the end of the year that OFY had its first virtual performance, with all of the students individually recording their parts at home. The students were closely guided by their mentors, with some mentors even recording the parts to serve as a guide for their students. For Christmas in 2021, they held a virtual Christmas caroling in an effort to raise funds. Music director Gerard Salonga personally handled the sound mixing and editing, giving him a chance to listen to all of the recordings individually and assess all of the scholars.

With the continuing ease of restrictions and widespread vaccinations, the OFY finally started to meet face-to-face in the second half of the year 2022. Individual lessons continued so that the students may work on their orchestral parts individually, and then the students gathered on Saturdays for sectionals with their mentors. Just recently in August, it was finally able to hold full orchestra rehearsals through a music camp. OFY is looking forward to being able to hold a live concert once again. However, the foundation really felt the loss of one of its benefactors. It is currently seeking additional funding to help continue its mission.

Wind Bands. While in Metro Manila, wind bands are not so visible in the community, it is an important part of community life in the four provinces that comprise the Greater Manila Area. During the time of COVID, many of the community activities of the bands stopped. Although the bands themselves, having less resources, did little to stage virtual performances, the biggest band competition in the Philippines, the Bacoar International Music Championships (BIMC), grew locally and internationally by becoming a virtual competition. From a few dozen band competitors including eleven foreign bands in 2018 (Pino, 2018), and then ceasing activities in 2020 during the pandemic, the BIMC in 2021 became fully virtual, with an unprecedented twenty-four categories not just for solo and ensemble musicians, but for the majorettes as well. These categories included Baton Twirling Free Style, Majorette Dance Twirl, Percussion and Battery Percussion, Ensembles for Woodwinds, Brasses and Mixed Winds, as well as solo instruments. These categories were further divided into subcategories according to age, making a total of 57 categories. There were a total of 354 solo and group competitors from fifteen countries (Bacoar International Music Championships, 2021), a new record for any band competition in the Philippines. The virtual awarding ceremony was streamed via Facebook, which allowed band enthusiasts around the Philippines and abroad to

witness the ceremony simultaneously.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about the loss of livelihood of musicians and other artists. However, orchestras and bands had a strong need to make music even in isolation. In order to that, these instrumental ensembles had to utilize online platforms in different ways, and through this, not only changed the process of music making, but was able to reach wider audiences, highlight individual musicians and integrate other forms of media. It is hoped that as Manila slowly returns to normal, that some of the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to be practiced.

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Biography

Crystal Milarose Rodis-Concepcion is currently an Assistant Professor for Flute at the University of the Philippines College of Music. She earned her bachelor's degree in Flute Performance at the University of the Philippines and her master's degree in Flute Performance at the University of Texas-Pan American. She is a three-time National Music Competitions for Young Artists (NAMCYA) winner, and former principal flutist of the Metro Manila Concert Orchestra (MMCO). In this time of virtual concerts, she has recently given a flute and piano recital and performed with the Rivera Woodwind Quintet, which took on the difficult task of performing major orchestra works reduced for woodwind quintet. She is currently pursuing her PhD from the University of the Philippines while remaining active as a solo, chamber and orchestra musician, most recently performing with the Manila Symphony Orchestra for Asia Orchestra Week in Tokyo, Japan. Her research interests include orchestras and wind bands in the Philippines.

Kesinambungan Kegiatan Teater Athens melalui Persembahan Penstriman Langsung semasa Pandemik COVID-19

*Continuation of Theatre Activities in Athens via Live Streaming Performances
During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Fazilah Husin

Fakulti Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi, Universiti Putra Malaysia

Serdang 43400, Selangor, Malaysia

School of Philosophy, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Zografou, Athens 15772, Greece

e-mel: fazilahh@upm.edu.my

Abstrak

Pandemik COVID-19 yang mengekang semua pergerakan masyarakat hampir di seluruh dunia telah juga menjejaskan kegiatan teater, termasuklah di bandar sejarah dan teater iaitu Athens. Kajian ini bertujuan membincangkan pendekatan yang diambil oleh kerajaan Greek dalam menangani situasi tersebut. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan etnografi dengan tumpuan kepada temubual dan analisis dokumen berkaitan subjek. Pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek yang beribu pejabat di Athens, yang bertanggungjawab terhadap pembangunan teater di negara itu telah mengambil tindakan drastik dengan mengadakan penstriman langsung untuk produksi teater terpilih secara dalam talian. Tujuan utama adalah untuk menyediakan ruang bagi kedua belah pihak iaitu penggiat dan penonton di negara itu yang mana teater adalah sebahagian kehidupan mereka.

Kata kunci: Athens, penstriman langsung, pandemik COVID-19, produksi teater

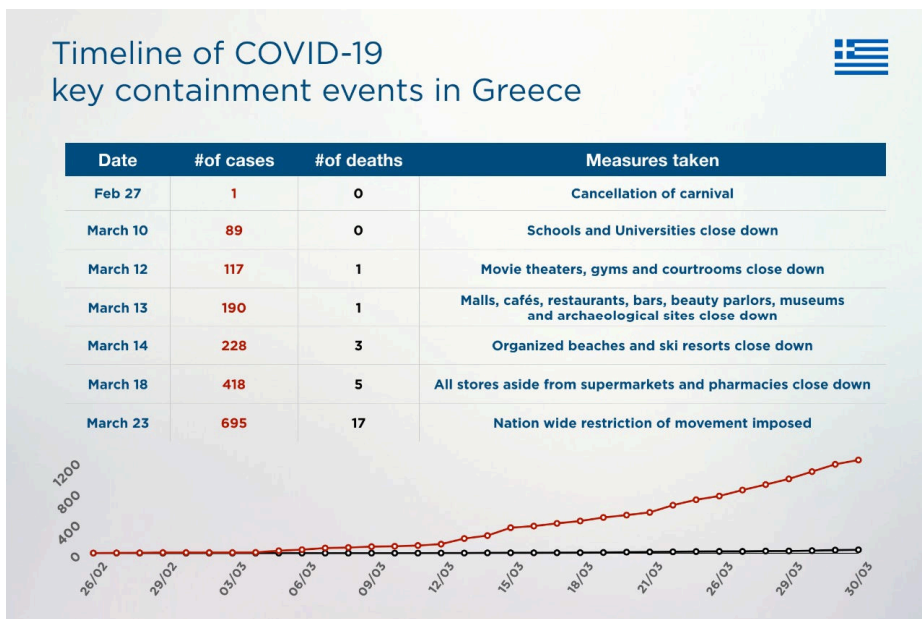
Abstract

The COVID 19 pandemic which has blocked all social movements almost worldwide has also affected theatre activities, including the historic and theatrical city of Athens. This study aims to discuss the approach taken by the Greece government in dealing with the situation. This study uses an ethnographic approach by focusing on interviews and document analysis related to the subject. The National Theater of Greece, headquartered in Athens, which is responsible for the development of theater in the country has taken drastic action by having live streaming for selected theater productions online. Its main purpose is to give space to both parties, the actor, and the audience in a country where theater is part of their lives.

Keywords: Athens, COVID-19, live streaming, pandemic, theatre production

Pendahuluan

Tarikh kawalan pergerakan pertama untuk Athens dan Greek adalah 23 Mac 2020, sementara tarikh pelaksanaan kawalan pergerakan dalam kapasiti yang sama sebagaimana yang pertama adalah pada 4-15 Mac 2021. Tetapi sejak 27 Februari 2020 telah dilaksanakan penutupan premis secara berperingkat hinggalah kepada penutupan sepenuhnya. Penutupan premis awam ini selaras dengan arahan Kerajaan Greek disebabkan ancaman pandemik COVID-19 di negara itu yang semakin meningkat. Ketika arahan tersebut dikeluarkan, negara itu telah pun merekodkan 620 kes yang disahkan dan 15 kematian berkaitan pandemik tersebut. Pada tahun 2021, sekali lagi Kerajaan Greek mengumumkan kawalan pergerakan selama dua minggu kerana kes baharu yang direkodkan ketika itu adalah tinggi berbanding tempoh yang sama ketika kawalan pergerakan pertama dilaksanakan, dimana dilaporkan sebanyak 2353 kes baharu, dan 1100 daripada kes itu adalah melibatkan warga Athens. Rajah 1 menunjukkan tahap pelaksanaan kawalan pergerakan yang dilaksanakan di Greek hinggalah kepada penutupan sepenuhnya pada 23 Mac 2020 serta premis dan program yang terlibat:



Rajah 1. Garis masa tindakan pencegahan dan pembendungan utama Covid-19 di Greek yang dikeluarkan oleh National Public Health Organization (4 Mac 2020).

Kawalan Pergerakan dan Kesan Awal terhadap Industri Teater di Athens

Teater merangkumi beberapa kegiatan utama khususnya pementasan, karnival, bengkel, uji bakat, latihan, promosi dan publisiti. Semua kegiatan ini melibatkan ruang, penggiat, pihak pengurusan dan pentadbiran serta masyarakat yang hadir sama ada ke pementasan, ujibakat, latihan, raptai, pejabat pengurusan, panggung dan pentas

untuk pelbagai tujuan berkaitan. Hanya sebahagian kecil sahaja yang dilaksanakan secara elektronik atau atas talian sebelum pandemik COVID-19 ini melanda dunia. Sehubungan itu, langkah kawalan pergerakan yang telah diambil oleh kerajaan, bukan sahaja di Greek malah di seluruh dunia yang menerima kesan pandemic ini, telah mengejutkan pelbagai pihak yang terlibat dengan industri ini terutama pemain utama seperti penerbit, pelakon, penulis skrip, pereka, serta lain-lain pihak yang terlibat secara langsung dengan bidang ini. Proses pelaksanaan dan pergerakan yang terhad mengganggu kelancaran perancangan sedia ada tetapi hal tersebut tidak dapat dielakkan demi keselamatan nyawa penggiat teater itu sendiri dan penonton yang hadir. Premis teater di Athens merangkumi ruang terbuka, tapak arkeologi dan bersejarah serta pentas terbuka moden serta panggung tertutup. Apabila dirujuk kepada graf di Rajah 1, ini bererti kegiatan teater dan seumpama dengannya yang menggunakan ruang yang termasuk dalam kategori di atas telah mulai ditutup pada 12 dan 13 Mac 2020. Lebih awal daripada itu semua bentuk festival dan karnival telah dibatalkan kerana acara seumpama ini melibatkan kehadiran ramai pengunjung yang memang sangat tidak sesuai dianjurkan ketika virus sedang merebak dengan begitu pantas.

Penutupan program berbentuk festival atau karnival ini sangat menjejaskan kegiatan teater di Athens dan Greek secara keseluruhannya kerana pada setiap tahun di bawah badan kerajaan Teater Kebangsaan Greek, akan dianjurkan program Festival Athens Epidaurus (AEF). Program ini adalah antara acara tahunan yang melibatkan sekurang-kurangnya 100,000 pengunjung setiap kali penganjurannya. Festival ini telah pun dianjurkan sejak 1955. Anggaran itu dibuat berdasarkan muatan penonton untuk panggung purba dan tapak arkeologi Teater Epidaurus yang terletak di Epidaurus, berjumlah 10,000 orang pada satu-satu masa, serta beberapa tapak atau panggung lain yang terletak di Agropolis dan Pireaus, Athens. Festival ini berlangsung selama tiga bulan, iaitu antara bulan Jun hinggalah ke pertengahan Ogos setiap tahun. Sepanjang festival ini berlangsung, selain teater dan aktiviti berkaitannya, seni persembahan lain turut digabungkan iaitu muzik, tarian dan opera. Jumlah pementasan di Athens meningkat daripada tahun ke tahun. Pada tahun 2013 sebanyak 1050 pementasan telah menemui penonton teater, manakala pada tahun 2014 sebanyak 1447 pementasan telah dilaksanakan. Jumlah pementasan pada tahun 2015 didapati meningkat lagi kepada 1542 buah produksi, dan pada tahun 2016 mencapai angka 1700 buah pementasan (Moundraki, 2017). Jumlah tersebut percayai terus meningkat ini adalah suatu yang membanggakan kepada Greek yang mewarisi tamadun teater sejak 550 Sebelum Masihi. Dengan jumlah produksi sebanyak itu, dapat dianggarkan bahawa Athens mempunyai jumlah penggiat teater yang besar yang terlibat dan bergantung hidup kepada industri ini. Apabila pandemik Covid 19 melanda hingga produksi teater dan kegiatan seni pentas lain terpaksa dihentikan, ini menjejaskan pendapatan bagi kelompok profesional bidang ini. Hal ini sangat disedari dan diambil berat oleh pihak kerajaan Greek (Moundraki, 2022).

Sebelum pandemik melanda pun industri teater tidak sunyi daripada masalah kehadiran penonton ke produksi yang sangat banyak. Jika dibahagikan secara purata daripada jumlah terakhir produksi teater direkodkan iaitu 1700 pementasan bagi tahun 2016, bererti setiap hari atau malam terdapat antara tiga atau lima produksi yang boleh dihadiri oleh masyarakat di Athens. Menurut Irene Mountraki (2022), dengan jumlah

penduduk yang relatif kecil kepada bandar teater seperti Athens, keadaan tersebut bagi beliau mempengaruhi jumlah penonton tempatan yang akan hadir ke teater. Penduduk Athens pada tahun 2020 adalah 3,153,781 juta, sementara pada tahun 2021 pula, adalah seramai 3,153,255 juta orang. Angka tersebut menunjukkan kemerosotan dari segi jumlah berbanding dengan tahun-tahun sebelumnya. Kemerosotan pertumbuhan penduduk Athens sebenarnya telah bermula sejak tahun 2001 (World Population Review, 2022). Selepas pembatalan karnival, langkah kawalan pergerakan diperluaskan dengan penutupan premis tertutup pada 12 Mac 2020 dan penutupan tapak arkeologi pada hari berikutnya. Kedua-dua penutupan ini juga sangat menjejaskan aktiviti teater kerana melibatkan panggung teater dan amfiteater purba yang digunakan sama ada untuk produksi di bawah karvinah mahu pun daripada syarikat dan badan teater yang lain sepanjang tahun. Kemuncak kepada situasi ini adalah penutupan sepenuhnya semua premis di Greek pada 23 Mac 2020.

Hubungan Teater dan Masyarakat Greek

Teater diwarisi dan terus hidup sebagai suatu budaya dalam kalangan masyarakat Athens dan Greek secara umumnya. Budaya ini terbentuk daripada pendedahan dan pendidikan tentang drama, teater dan seni persembahan telah diberikan sejak anak-anak kecil lagi melalui pelbagai produk yang memberikan pengalaman teater kepada kanak-kanak seawal umur tiga tahun. Seterusnya remaja dan belia berpeluang mendalami bidang ini diperingkat sekolah dan pengajian tinggi. Pendidikan menyediakan pekerja atau penggiat seni yang berwibawa dan profesional yang mampu menawarkan produk-produk seni persembahan bermutu tinggi. Panggung-panggung teater pelbagai konsep reka bentuk, lokasi yang tidak lagi terhad kepada pentas dan panggung sahaja tetapi ruang-ruang alternatif dan baharu untuk menampung pelbagai jenis persembahan dramatik dan teaterikal telah tumbuh di Athens. Kebangkitan ini penting kepada kesinambungan kegemilangan teater di Athens, memastikan masyarakat tempatan dan antarabangsa untuk terus dapat menikmati teater di Athens adalah perkara yang menjadi keutamaan pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek. Begitu dengan kebajikan para pembikin teater juga turut menjadi perhatian kerana kewujudan penggiat teater ini sebenarnya yang mengekalkan keunggulan dan hidup mati teater di Athens dan Greek. Sehubungan itu momentum kreativiti dan produktiviti mereka perlu disokong dan diberikan peluang untuk terus berkembang. Hal ini sangat dititikberatkan oleh pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek yang berusaha mengambil pelbagai langkah dan tindakan untuk membantu golongan seni ini. Produk seperti Festival Athens Epidaurus telah menjadi produk yang sangat penting untuk memberi peluang kepada para pembikin teater menyerlah hasil kerja seni masing-masing untuk jumlah penonton yang lebih besar, secara tersusun dan bertaraf antarabangsa. Selain itu, setiap daerah di Athens juga diberikan ruang dan peruntukan untuk majlis perbandaran daerah tersebut mengadakan atau mengendalikan program berkaitan teater dan seni persembahan pentas yang lain. Pihak kerajaan juga menyalurkan atau menyediakan sejumlah dana untuk membantu kegiatan teater. Tetapi masih belum mencukupi untuk membantu semua penggiat teater kerana jumlah yang diperuntukan adalah kecil berbanding bilangan syarikat

yang terlibat dengan teater di Athens dan Greek secara keseluruhannya. Pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek menyediakan saluran yang boleh diakses oleh para penggiat teater melalui kumpulan, persatuan atau syarikat teater masing-masing untuk memohon peruntukan tersebut. Menurut Irene Moundraki (2022), minat yang mendalam terhadap teater dalam kalangan masyarakat Athens dan Greek, amnya, menyebabkan para penggiat ini tetap berkarya walaupun tanpa bantuan dana daripada mana-mana pihak atau pun mendapat keuntungan daripada teater.

Objektif dan Pendekatan Kajian

Kajian ini bertujuan membincangkan pendekatan yang diambil oleh pihak kerajaan di bawah Teater Kebangsaan Greek yang berpusat di Athens, dalam menangani situasi dimana teater tidak dapat dipentaskan, semua aktiviti berkaitan tidak boleh dilakukan, pergerakan adalah terhad dan perlukan dokumen tertentu untuk setiap individu yang ingin keluar dan masuk ke premis, daerah mahu pun negeri. Manakala aktiviti berkumpul beramai-ramai atau dalam kumpulan yang melibatkan interaksi fizikal adalah dilarang sama sekali. Hal ini telah menjejaskan dan melumpuhkan segala perancangan yang telah dibuat dan bakal dilaksanakan, keadaan ini juga mencetuskan keadaan tidak menentu dan kebimbangan serta tanda tanda dalam kalangan penggiat teater tentang masa hadapan mereka dan apakah yang harus dilakukan dengan karya masing-masing:

“A first round of quarantine online meetings showed we all agree on at least one point: the lockdown hurts ... In Greek, within a short time, a large number of artists lost their jobs. Productions were canceled, small art venues closed, dance and theater classes stopped, while the state remains, until now, silent on the demand for state support for art” (Mitsika, t.t).

Pengumpulan data kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan etnografi dengan tumpuan kepada temubual dengan informan daripada Teater Kebangsaan Greek iaitu Dr Irene Moundraki yang merupakan Ketua Jabatan Drama, Pustaka, Arkib dan Perhubungan Antarabangsa, Teater Kebangsaan Greek, Athens, Greek. Pendekatan kedua adalah analisis dokumen berkaitan penggiat teater di Greek terhadap pelaksanaan kawalan pergerakan secara menyeluruh di Greek bermula pada 23 Mac 2020. Kajian ini meninjau beberapa maklumbalas daripada penggiat teater Athens melalui laman web dan sosial masing-masing, tentang keadaan diri mereka apabila mereka terpaksa menghentikan kegiatan teater masing-masing. Dokumen lain yang dianalisis ialah tentang program teater penstriman langsung yang diterbitkan oleh pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek.

Dapatan dan Perbincangan

Berdasarkan perbincangan sebelum ini, didapati bahawa teater adalah sesuatu yang sangat penting kepada masyarakat Greek khususnya di kota Athens yang merupakan pusat utama kegiatan teater di negara tersebut. Kesan pelaksanaan kawalan pergerakan terhadap penggiat teater di negara tersebut telah diambil kira oleh pihak

kerajaan, juga untuk menampung keperluan masyarakat yang mana aktiviti menonton teater adalah sesuatu yang mengalir dalam diri bangsa Greek dan mereka bangga mewarisinya. Hal ini akui oleh Irene Moundraki (2022) yang turut menjelaskan tentang langkah-langkah yang telah diambil oleh pihak kerajaan melalui Teater Kebangsaan Greek yang beribu pejabat di Athens. Panggung teater terbuka telah dibenarkan mengadakan pementasan secara fizikal sejak 1 Julai 2020. Pembukaan ini memberikan peluang untuk penggiat teater merancang aktiviti mereka. Langkah awal yang diambil oleh pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek adalah mengusahakan produksi teater secara penstriman langsung (*live streaming*) untuk sejumlah produksi yang terpilih. Terdapat dua kaedah yang dikenalpasti dilaksanakan oleh pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek berkaitan penstriman langsung ini: pertama, pada 23 Julai 2020 telah diadakan produksi teater di ampiteater purba Epidaurus untuk pementasan “The Persian” dengan penonton fizikal adalah hanya 4500 penonton berbanding 10,000 kapasiti sebenar panggung tersebut (Kitsantonis, 2020). Pementasan ini telah ditayangkan juga secara dalam talian kepada penonton di seluruh dunia secara percuma (Oliver, 2020). Tujuannya adalah untuk menghidupkan kembali kegiatan teater di ampiteater tersebut yang juga merupakan tapak Festival Athens Epidaurus.

Pendekatan kedua yang diambil oleh Teater Kebangsaan Greek adalah pelaksanaan penstriman langsung sepenuhnya yang berpusat atau bertempat di bangunan panggung Teater Kebangsaan Greek yang terletak di kota Athens. Senarai produksi adalah seperti disenaraikan dalam Jadual 1. Penstriman langsung ini dikendalikan atau dibekalkan perkhidmatannya oleh syarikat View Master Events (2020/2021) yang mempunyai kepakaran dalam penerbitan filem, pengurusan produksi, panggung wayang, program budaya, sukan dan korpoarat sama ada dalam mahu pun luar negara Greek. Penstriman secara langsung yang dilaksanakan oleh syarikat profesional ini telah memberikan kesan persembahan visual dan audio yang baik kepada para penonton yang menonton secara dalam talian. Pementasan ini didapati berjalan sepanjang tahun 2020 di mana pandemik masih belum pulih. Tujuan medium ini terus dilaksanakan walau pun terdapat panggung teater telah dibenarkan beroperasi dengan prosedur kesihatan yang ditetapkan, untuk menampung penonton yang tidak dapat, tidak boleh atau tidak mampu hadir secara fizikal.

Jadual 1

Senarai produksi melalui penstriman langsung (live online broadcasts) terbitan Teater Kebangsaan Greek oleh View Master Events 2020/2021

Tarikh	Tajuk Produksi Teater
21. 11. 2020	<i>“To you who are listening to me”</i>
28.11.2020 & 26.12.2020	<i>“The lady from Maxim’s”</i>
4.12.2020	<i>“Paper moon”</i>
9.1.2021	<i>“Medea, Euripides, Medea’s Son(g)s, Research Theatre of Classical Drama”</i>

Kesimpulan

Pelaksanaan pementasan secara dalam talian bukanlah sebagai ganti kepada bentuk teater sedia ada tetapi sebagai suatu penyokong dan saluran sementara untuk keadaan pulih seperti sedia kala kerana penggiat teater tetap memegang teater sebagaimana asalnya harus dipentaskan secara langsung yang menemukan antara produksi dengan penonton di suatu ruang yang dinamakan pentas. Perkara yang penting diperhatikan di sini ialah tindakan pihak Teater Kebangsaan Greek membuka semula kegiatan teater sebaik keadaan pandemik di negara tersebut terkawal, iaitu selepas empat bulan pelaksanaan kawalan pergerakan pertama, pada Mac 2020. Pembukaan semula secara sedikit demi sedikit ini merupakan suatu bentuk rangsangan kepada penggiat teater untuk bangkit berkarya sebagaimana sebelum pandemik melanda. Kerjasama antara pelbagai pihak iaitu kerajaan, penggiat teater dan penyedia perkhidmatan dan kepakaran dalam bidang penyiaran seperti yang diperolehi oleh Teater Kebangsaan Greek merupakan suatu inisiatif dan pengalaman terbaik untuk dipelajari oleh industri ini untuk terus berkembang di peringkat tempatan dan antarabangsa.

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Nota

Temubual: Dr. Irene Mountraki, Ketua Perhubungan Drama, Pustaka, Arkib dan Perhubungan Antarabangsa, Teater Kebangsaan Greek, Athens; pensyarah teater di *Piraeus Society Drama School*, Athens; dan ahli panel *Hellenic Association of Theatre and Performing Arts Critics*.
Tarikh & Tempat: 12 Julai 2022 & Pejabat Ketua Jabatan Drama, Pustaka, Arkib dan Perhubungan Antarabangsa, Teater Kebangsaan Greek, Athens, Greek.

Biografi

Fazilah Husin berkelulusan Doktor Falsafah dalam bidang Drama dan Teater, bertugas sebagai pensyarah kanan di Jabatan Bahasa Melayu, Fakulti Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi, Universiti Putra Malaysia, kini sedang melaksanakan sabatikal dengan penyelidikan berjudul Budaya Teater Athens di bawah penyeliaan Dr Xenia Georgopoulou, di National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Athens, Greek.

“Eisenhardt Method” as an Interdisciplinary Approach in the Study of “Theatre Film”

Zhang Xuan¹, Andika Aziz Hussin²
School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)
11800 Penang, Malaysia
e-mail: xuan1991@student.usm.my¹
e-mail: andika2020@usm.my²

Abstract

Nowadays, an interdisciplinary approach has been widely applied to the study of performing arts. The scientific and practical nature of the research methodology is key to determining the future direction of the research. “So, from the multi- /inter- /trans disciplinary perspectives of drama, theatre and performance research not to know where your project is heading exactly, or even avoiding a methodological tactic in favour of more risky ones, can produce fruitful failures” (Kershaw & Nicholson, 2011). As an important model of case study methodology, the “Eisenhardt Method” is widely used in social science research. The “Eisenhardt Method” is first and foremost about theory building (Eisenhardt, 2021). This research approach, which facilitates the development of a particular theory, can precisely address the new situations encountered by performing arts such as theatre in the context of technological progress. Researchers have noted that with the increasing availability of medium, performing arts are no longer confined to a fixed stage, time and space. Pribisic (2010) gives a definition of “Theatre Film.” With the development of film and new media technologies, the theory of “Theatre Film” needs to be further developed. The researcher has developed a theoretical construction of “Theatre Film” through the steps of the “Eisenhardt Method.” The results of the study will provide a new approach to theoretical development of “Theatre Film,” a form of theatre adaptation research.

Keywords: adaptation, Eisenhardt Method, interdisciplinary, medium, theatre film

Introduction

Research methods in any discipline need to be kept up to date, and this seems particularly important in the case of the discipline of theatre and performance. The development of modern technology, particularly media and communication technology, has had a huge impact on traditional ways of performing and presenting. As Kershaw and Nicholson (2011) have noted, “Performance happens in more types of theatres than ever before, and in many other places than in theatres” (p. 1). And when mankind encountered COVID-19, the traditional theatre performance almost hit the pause button. At the same time, poor external factors seem to have stimulated the

subjectivity of theatre and performance practitioners. In the words of Cosslett (2020), “Isolation has historically proved fruitful, and artists are producing new work all the time.” Researchers are concerned that when the age of pandemics arrived, theatre practitioners were successful in adapting theatre, with the emergence of “Online Theatre” and “Theatre Film” that differ from traditional forms. As these new art forms are not widely recognised, even the notion of them is open to some questioning voices. Therefore, the researchers tried to find a research method that would facilitate the construction of a theory about the new artistic forms of theatre adaptation. It is against this background that this paper takes a look at theatre adaptation research in recent years and attempts to introduce an interdisciplinary approach to the field of theatre and performance studies. It is known as the “Eisenhardt Method.”

What is the “Eisenhardt Method?” Does it apply?

“Eisenhardt Method” was first coined by Langley and Abdallah in 2011. Compared to quantitative research, qualitative research faces rules, formats and norms that are not homogeneous and perfect in terms of implementation, writing and publication. This research paradigm has been named after its initiator for its particular contribution to the field of research (Langley & Abdallah, 2011). The term is based on a series of papers on research methods published by Kathleen M. Eisenhardt since 1989, the most famous of which is the early work entitled “Building theories from case study research.” At the time of writing, this article has been cited over 70,000 citations in Google Scholar and is still growing. When Langley and Abdallah introduced the concept of the “Eisenhardt Method” in 2011, the article was cited over 11,000 citations, which was exciting even then. The changing times and growing numbers have kept this research method in the spotlight and in use by researchers. In short, it is a qualitative methodology on case studies. It is true that the “Eisenhardt Method” is present in the study of management and plays a major role in this discipline. So, is the “Eisenhardt Method” really appropriate for the field of theatre and performance studies?

First, before turning to the areas of application of the “Eisenhardt Method,” it is important to understand the scope of application of the case study method. Crowe et al. (2011) draw a conclusion, “It is an established research design that is used extensively in a wide variety of disciplines, particularly in the social sciences.” The “Eisenhardt Method” is a model of the case study method. It provides researchers with a concrete template for implementing the case study method. Eisenhardt (1989) pointed out that “The second contribution is positioning theory building from case studies into the larger context of social science research” (p. 533). As the inventor of this method herself said, this should be placed in the realm of the broad field of social sciences. Indeed, even the operation of the Eisenhardt Method itself often requires interdisciplinary thinking and is not confined to the knowledge of one field of study. As Gehman et al. (2018) advised, “As the theory advances, we incorporate other literature, from both our field and other fields” (p. 288). It is worth noting that the researcher found that there existed some studies in the humanities and arts that often lacked a valid and specific research methodology, and even some results that claimed to be case studies often did not apply a scientific case study methodology, but seemed

more like an example. Hannula et al. (2014) pointed out that “This danger is highlighted in the aspects of how much and what kind of connection to and knowledge of their context, its past, present and future, the agents claiming to be doing practice-based artistic research have” (p. 10). A scientific approach to research is therefore essential and, in particular, it is worth using methods that have been extensively validated.

Secondly, in terms of the two disciplines of theatre and management alone, they are not insurmountable. It is easy to see that researchers in management have been able to flexibly apply theories from the field of theatre to their research. Let us illustrate this with two articles. The first article, entitled “Toward an integrative approach to designing service experiences Lessons learned from the theatre,” is a qualitative study based on a case. The author of this article argues that companies can learn from theatre performances in their customer experience design. The scenario of the customer experience is very similar to a theatrical performance. Specifically, the characters of the experience are similar to actors, the process of the experience is similar to a script, and the physical setting of the experience is similar to a stage setting. The authors are concerned that theatre, unlike film production, faces many improvisational situations when designing and presenting a show, much like the problems faced by companies delivering customer experiences (Stuart & Tax, 2004). The author and the research team then chose the rehearsal process of a real play by a theatre company as the subject of their study. Interestingly, they are required to observe the design process and performance of theatre, which does not seem to be very different from research in the field of theatre, just a different way of thinking about it. Another article entitled “Theatrical Improvisation: Lessons for Organizations” is also very interesting in terms of its title. The authors begin by contrasting the advantages and disadvantages of using jazz and theatre to understand improvisation. In the field of research in organisational management, the use of jazz to study improvisation across disciplines has previously emerged. Their argument is that theatre has an advantage over jazz because the improvisation of theatre comes from real life and does not need to be recreated in the same way as jazz (Vera & Crossan, 2004). The authors of these two articles take an in-depth look at the field of theatre in order to make a good interdisciplinary study. The research perspectives in both articles focus on concepts and theories that have not yet been clearly defined in the subject area. Through interdisciplinary conceptual transplantation, performance design and improvisational theatre from the field of theatre studies are introduced into the field of management. It made the researcher ponder that researchers in management have delved into learning and borrowing from theatre concepts, so why shouldn't we as researchers in the field of theatre try to learn from the knowledge or methods of management? As it happens, the researchers have also discovered a concept that needs to be studied in depth: “Theatre Film.”

What is the “Theatre Film?” What is its significance?

“Theatre Film” is a meeting of the two arts, theatre and film, which transforms the dialogue between stage and audience into a dialogue between theatre and film (Picon-Vallin, 2001). Pribisic (2010) further explores the concept of “Theatre Film” and analyses it in the context of specific adaptations. In addition, he presents a study of the significance of the concept of “Theatre Film” in the field of adaptation theory.

In the words of Pribisic (2010), “I suggest we look at ‘theater film’: a model that expands the field of adaptation studies to fit the postmodern intermediality and allows for discussion of all the nonliterary sources now at play within adaptations and among adapters” (p. 149). “Theatre Film” is based on a research perspective on theatre adaptation. Theatre adaptation is an important area of study in the discipline of theatre, and it is becoming increasingly important today.

When COVID-19 arrives and traditional theatres can’t open their doors, adapting theatre is an effective way of sustaining creativity, with artists moving the venues of theatre performances to the internet, where audiences can watch new forms of theatre on various screens such as mobile phones and computers. It is worth noting that the demand for theatre did not wane during the pandemic, even though people could not get into a real theatre. As Radermecker (2021) have noted, “By contrast, the demand for cultural and creative content has intensified throughout the lockdown period, with digital access having become more critical than ever before.” So, during the pandemic, some artists began experimenting with producing “Online Theatre.” In contrast to traditional theatre productions, “Online Theatre” requires producers to have some media skills in order to ensure that this new form of theatre can be presented (Andika Aziz Hussin & Addley Bromeo Bianus, 2022). The use of such media technologies, such as camera technology and video editing, is more established in the field of film and television. “Online Theatre” is still essentially about adaptation from stage to screen, in the same way as “Theatre Film.” In contrast, “Theatre Film” is a much more time-spanning subject, be it during the pandemic, before or even in the future.

Steps in constructing the theory of “Theatre Film” using “Eisenhardt Method”

The “Eisenhardt Method” gives concrete steps for constructing a theory from case study. It is divided into eight steps (see Figure 1).

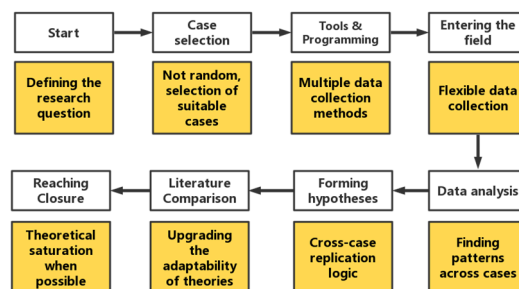


Figure 1. Process of Building Theory from Case Study Research (Eisenhardt, 1989).

These research steps were, after all, originally designed for the field of management, and the implementation of some of them would need to be moderately adapted if it were to be placed in a theatre adaptation study. Step 1: Define the research question. The concept of “Theatre Film” is not yet clearly understood and it is a suitable starting point for a study. Step 2, case selection. Previous researchers have already given examples of studies that can be used for “Theatre Film” and new cases can be studied in relation to specific regions. Step 3, the design of the research tool. A combination of data collection methods were used, such as observation and literature review. In the case of “Theatre Film,” the pre-adaptation theatre video and the post-adaptation film were the most important data. As the cases chosen were already completed adaptations, it was not appropriate for the researcher to go ahead and conduct interviews, which could be done by collecting relevant information from the past as data. The same applies to step 4. For “Theatre Film,” entering the field is not as easy as researching a business in a real-world setting. Even if the researcher observes the process of creating the case, it does not mean that this is the field, by which I mean that only the final product is truly the field of “Theatre Film,” often in the form of a film. The researcher is required to delve into the world of sound and picture in “Theatre Film” and to apply theories of theatre and film to the analysis of its audio-visual elements. This is exactly what needs to be done in step 5, and the subsequent steps depend on the progress of previous studies. They are data analysis, hypothesis formation, literature comparison to concluding the study.

Conclusion

If theatre portrays (renders) the world, it appears that we can study it across many disciplines to better comprehend our own (Pavis, 2001). Now that the discipline of management has introduced theatre theory for interdisciplinary study, why not vice versa? “Theatre Film,” as a “product” of theatrical adaptation, is essentially like a corporate process of product transformation. When the shape of this “product” is not yet clear, it seems worth exploring the theoretical construction of it using the “Eisenhardt Method.” Whether it is the present time of the pandemic or the future, adapting traditional theatre means innovation and change, and circumstances drive people to make changes, there is no time to lose. “Theatre Film” will help researchers and creators to focus on the development and transformation of traditional art in an era of media convergence.

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Biography

Zhang Xuan has a BA and MFA in Radio & Television Arts from China and has been teaching in this field at university for 7 years. He is currently working toward the Ph.D. degree in Drama & Theatre with the School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Andika Aziz Hussin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Master's degree in Theatre Production and a Doctor of Philosophy in Drama from the University of Hull, United Kingdom. Academic involvement for 23 years. A lecturer attached to the Department of Drama & Theatre, School of The Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia.

Being in Two Places at Once: Dual Meanings and Identities in the Composition (Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko

Alexander John Villanueva
University of the Philippines College of Music, Graduate Studies Program
Diliman, Quezon City
e-mail: alvillanueva1@up.edu.ph

Abstract

The creative work for this presentation is (Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko is a play of words in the Tagalog language which means, “I’ll allow it to happen” (pabayaan ko) or “my country” (bayan ko). The piece is based on Bayan Ko (My Dear Country) a kundiman composed in 1928 by Constancio De Guzman based on poetry by Jose Corazon de Jesus. The poem speaks of the Philippines as a beautiful country yet still in the grips of tyranny. This performance is a world premiere by the Ripieno Ensemble in the Cultural Center of the Philippines in September of 2019 in collaboration with sound artists who created new instruments for the piece. This piece is part of a series of works questioning dualities of identity in my artistic voice as I am confounded with my position as a Filipino composer in a globalized world continuously confronting tradition. In this presentation, I will be discussing different ways on how I reflected hybridity in my music all centered in commentaries of social realities in the Philippines as well as the use of materials from the traditional Kundiman reflecting a postcolonial national and a globalized identity.

Keywords: composition, hybridity, identity, kundiman, nationalism

Introduction

In this presentation, I discuss my piece (Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko, a hybrid chamber work for pierrot ensemble, two sopranos, and electronic hybrid instruments. The purpose of this paper is to point out dual meanings and paradoxes that have sprung out from my reflections on the kundiman *Bayan Ko* by Constancio De Guzman and Jose Corazon de Jesus, as well as what is seen in Philippine society that I have turned into a social commentary which is what the inspiration of this piece is.

On a bigger perspective, I situate myself as a composer and an artist in the context of a postcolonial Philippines. With centuries of colonialism from the Spanish friars to the American imperialists, chaotic underpinnings of change and identity have forever marred what it is to be a Filipino, especially in the milieu of neoliberalism. But as an inquiry to my creative identity, I will look at the past through examining my works, as well as the future while continuously searching for an identity through

Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity or the third space, hence, being in two places at once.

As a presentation dealing with postcolonialism, there is always a concern on politicized culture (Bloechl, 2016), as well as social contradictions (Young, 2003), while being subjected to a historical identity created by mimicry and hybridity, as well as ambivalence (Jefferess, 2008). All these are underscored by the continuous search for nationalism which has revealed itself in Philippine contemporary music as an assertion of equality to musics of Western tradition and as a concept of self-actualization where promotion of one's own culture is a liberation from colonial ideologies (Santos, 2013).

These are areas of inquiry that guide my creative identity. Furthermore, being trained in the University of the Philippines where, as National Artist for Music Ramon Santos said that "nationalism in Filipino music as a movement may be said to have been born" (2017), there is indeed a sense of nationalism instilled in my work as will be discussed in the analyses of selected works. As I subject myself in contemporary Philippine society, there is still much colonial mentality from the higher ranks of government existent, further confusing the population of what it is, what it means, and what we own as Filipinos.



Figure 1. The hybrid electronic instruments.

(Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko

(Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko is a play of words, a dual meaning, in the Tagalog language which means, “I’ll allow it to happen” (*pabayaan ko*) or “my country” (*bayan ko*). The piece is based on *Bayan Ko* (My Dear Country) a kundiman composed in 1928 by Constancio De Guzman based on poetry by Jose Corazon de Jesus. The poem speaks of the Philippines as a beautiful country yet still in the grips of tyranny. The Philippines is, then, metaphorized as a bird that is to be set free. Although it was written during the American occupation in the Philippines, it is more closely linked to the EDSA People Power Revolution of 1986 where the dictator Ferdinand Marcos was ousted. It was also sung as a battle cry during the funeral of the assassinated Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. who strongly opposed the Marcos regime, and as a memorial of the life and sacrifices of his wife, the late President Corazon Aquino. The piece is for flute, clarinet, two sopranos, violin, cello, and piano. It was written in collaboration with several sound artists and composers who created hybrid electronic instruments (Figure 1) specifically for the premiere of this piece. These composers and sound artists include Datu Arellano, Teresa Barrozo, Ian Carlo Jaucian, Malek Lopez, Jon Romero, and Stanley Ruiz, all of whom were gathered by Erwin Romulo, who produced the performance and is a composer himself. The piece was premiered in the Cultural Center of the Philippines in September of 2019 by the Ripieno Ensemble, a pierrot ensemble based in the University of the Philippines College of Music that is dedicated to the performance of contemporary classical music from the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

There were three new instruments and an add-on to the piano that is unique for this piece: electric “koto,” “wonder pole,” three handheld sensors controlling the radio (radio discombobulator), and white noise pads that are taped on piano keys. The working idea for the creation of the instruments was, first, their accessibility to musicians. The electric “koto” is similar in playing technique to a Japanese koto with the production of vibrato as well as plucking with a plectrum. It differs because it uses six electric guitar strings, the pegs are fixed through thirty-six holes set perpendicularly to the strings, and it is not silent at all as it produces a distorted white noise that changes in frequency upon the pressure of touching it producing a ground. This instrument was played by one of the sopranos.

The “wonder pole” is quite like the cello according to its creator. It is made with a Teeny micro controller. It is played like a fretted instrument where the position of the hand along the conductive (painted) strip determines the pitch. It also produces “rain” sounds which is controlled by a gyroscope. It was played by the cellist.

The static pads for piano were used with electrically conductive tape that activates the short circuit upon being touched producing the white noise. It is simply taped on the keys of the piano.

The radio discombobulator revolves on the process of producing and modifying sound from actions received by sensors. This resulted to sounds from the Radio being manipulated. For example, the Radio plays AM or FM frequencies, movement triggers the radio to do any of the following: change frequencies, change pitch, volume. This was used by the two sopranos.

Organizing and conceptualizing music with these hybrid electronic instruments started off with another piece performed earlier that year – *a-no-ba-yan* which is also a play of words: *Ano ba 'yan!* (What the heck), or *Ano, bayan?!* (What now, my country). It is a social commentary on the events surrounding the country during that time (February 2019)–fake patriotism, national sovereignty, national vs. personal interest–which is still relevant until now. We are always presented with statements and actions that are in fact layers and layers of facts, sometimes lies, that we, as citizens, should pull apart ourselves, sometimes causing hearsay/fake news, or misinterpretation, hence, a duality of truth, and identity.

(Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko stems from the same idea—where multiplicities of truth, identity, even aesthetics meet to either resolve, negate, or have this dual nature. It is here that I situate myself as a composer in a democratic space between the music of my country, and the music of the West as I continuously ask myself; (a) “who am I as a composer?” (b) “what language do I use as a composer?” and (c) “is there a correct aesthetic that I should veer into as a Filipino young composer in the midst of a globalized community?” This space is reflected on many fronts in this piece starting primarily with the musical borrowing of *Bayan Ko*, which also exhibits a democratic space in form, tonality, and poetry.

At this point, it is important to note of what I think are disjunctures in the music that open dialogues reflecting dual meanings and identities; (a) acoustic instruments and the hybrid electronic instruments as objects, (b) the instruments, their playing techniques and sound production, and (c) static as noise and static as framed.

The Composition

The direction of the piece is the tonal direction of the first 3 notes of the second section of *Bayan Ko* which I transposed to the key of B. It starts with D#/Eb in the first section and C#/Db in the second section, expounded by the “similarities” of sound of the acoustic instruments and the made electronic instruments. These sections are marked by an improvisatory passage (Figure 2) from the two sopranos expanding on the transformation of the idea of similarity as well as painting a picture of meditation, rest, and peace that is further met by the un-peace and chaos. It is my idea that the dichotomy of what is made (hybrid electronic instruments) and the established (the ensemble instruments and the voices), as also is reflective of their sound production, will never be similar. But in listening, there is an identity that one gives the other making the reconcilable to irreconcilable and the irreconcilable to reconcilable. The piece ends with the “direct” quotation of *Bayan Ko* on the piano while the radio is manipulated through the proximity sensors.

Pauline, Stef: *ad libitum* while going to **Position B**
sing passages from boxes.
no silences in between each other's choices

Figure 2. Improvisatory parts for the two sopranos.

Finding a Sound “Space” among the Instruments

The project started in July and even took some time before the instruments were completed. During rehearsals, there was a bit of awkwardness in playing the hybrid instruments. The “electric” koto, on one hand, lacked a bit of definiteness in its pitch. The wonder pole’s pitch was not that easy to control. Achieving an audible radio sound from the radio discombobulator was difficult at first, especially since there was not much room for adjustments as it was a few weeks until the premiere.

Of course, there was an expectation of a similar playing technique with the instruments as claimed by its creators, but, it was different. It was inclusive as it can be easily learned, but to produce something definite and controlled with the instruments was to be re-thought. And since the learning curve for the playing technique was not that steep, the ensemble was able to learn how to play them and their parts in days.

During the process of composition, I dealt with the decision of assigning which instruments is handled by members of the ensemble. It was fixed in my mind that the wonder pole was like the cello as said by its creator, and it stuck in my mind making me assign a double instrument to the cello. The “electric” koto was a bit of a challenge because nobody really played the koto in the ensemble. But it was given to one of the sopranos as she was quick to learn the instrument. The radio discombobulator was given to the two sopranos with the idea of also achieving something theatrical that went along with their improvisational parts. Also, the thought of ending the piece with the sound of random Philippine radio stations resonated with me as I wanted to frame the sound of the media through the sound of random radio stations.

The sound production of the electronic instruments was a big factor in deciding on musical materials for the piece. The instruments produced static noises which act as the base sound. The noises can be framed as they can be modified through the position of the hand along the painted strip (as for the wonder pole) which acts like a fret, along with a gyroscope that emulates a rain stick, the pitched strings and

ground from the body when the instrument is touched (as for the electric koto), and proximity sensors on the handheld sensors for radio. The static noises were “matched” by the acoustic instruments through pressure bows from the strings, multiphonics in the winds, chord clusters in the piano, and uses of small percussion like the woodblock which the clarinet is doubling. The electronic instruments, on the other hand, needed to be “musical” as well, but this is not possible in the sense of traditional Western concert music. The “electric” koto was needed to be tinkered with to find possible tunings to suit what was needed for the piece. The wonder pole was used as a source of musical “violence,” and the handheld sensors for radio were used to frame the radio sound that I have mentioned earlier.

On *Bayan Ko*

Borrowing was done by incorporating ideas from the poetry and music of *Bayan Ko*. The poetry of the kundiman is a paradox as it speaks of a bird that is meant to be free but is continuously in captivity. This is reflected in how the voice is treated like an instrument in the first section of the piece, only playing with syllables that are based on the first few words of the second section of *Bayan Ko*: *Ibon mang may laying lumipad* (Birds that are free to fly). This balance is deliberately broken as they are drowned in the sound of the ensemble towards the final section of the piece. Can it be that this “drowning” describes the struggle for freedom as mentioned in the poetry (*Aking adhika, makita kang sakdal laya*) (My dream is to see you free)?

Still focusing on the second section of *Bayan Ko*, as also I have stated earlier, I have used only three notes to be developed in the piece, particularly those that coincide with the words *Ibon mang may laying lumipad* (Birds that are free to fly) and *Pilipinas kong minumutya, pugad ng luha ko’t dalita* (My treasured Philippines, home of tears and torment). The last section’s radio sound framing is also framed in the harmonic progression of the said lines. This is the only “direct” quotation of the music used in the piece.

The framing of random radio stations in the end section (Figure 3) is meant to reflect the paradox the media in that it can either inform or disinform, it can either educate or miseducate, it can either be for the people or against the people—a paradox that is reflected not just in media but in Philippine society today.

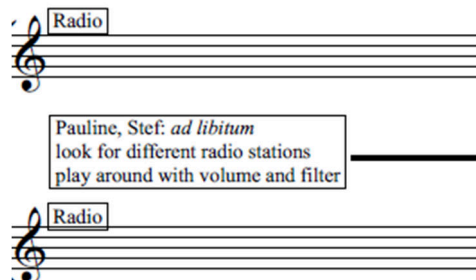


Figure 1. Excerpt from the end section.

The Performance

To add to the paradox, this piece that is meant to represent paradoxes including the media is presented in the context of the Manila International Performing Arts Market 2019, an event by the Philippines' Department of Trade Industry's Center for International Trade and Missions with the intention of having a "new event that will bridge business and the arts." (Department of Trade and Industry, 2019) Although there is much freedom given for the mounting of the piece, one cannot pass the idea that this piece is paradoxical to the intention of furthering the culture industry as Adorno (Puolakka, 2018) would think.

Conclusion

In a postcolonial society, art and politics become uncomfortable and disturbing (Bhabha, 1994, p. 251) making dialogues in art democratized (hopefully). The paradoxical meaning of *Bayan Ko* talking about captivity even in perceived freedom can be reflected in Philippine society until now as we face social realities involving sovereignty, diaspora, patronage in government, and even globalization. With this, I have used my piece (Pa)-ba-ya-(a)n-ko to reflect my social commentary on the realities surrounding the Philippines using musical borrowing from *Bayan Ko*, also reflecting its imagery of perceived freedom.

Another layer of thought is my inquiry into my own artistic voice as I am confounded with my position as a Filipino composer in a globalized world continuously confronting tradition. I view this as violence (Bhabha, 1994, p. 93) that subjects my identity as a composer. I have reflected this using hybridity in my music in the instrumentation, as well as the "matching" of the acoustic instruments versus the hybrid electronic instruments. We can also see this at work in the production of the composition as it is also subjected to various violences that it tries to battle, but furthermore resulting in a new space of democratization through this piece.

Being in two places at once, therefore, contends a new meaning from dual meanings, a new way of understanding, maybe even an awkwardness, a learning curve, something that is not the other.

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Biography

Alexander John “AJ” L. Villanueva (b. 1989) is a composer and conductor based in Manila. He was recently awarded a composer residency with Ensemble Recherche from Freiburg, Germany for 2021-2022. He is the conductor and artistic director of the Ripieno Ensemble, a chamber ensemble founded in 2015 which specializes in 21st century contemporary chamber and vocal music, with performances in China, Hong Kong and around Manila. He is currently a doctoral student in music with research interests in post-colonial Filipino identity in composition and Evangelical praise and worship music. He is Senior Lecturer of Composition and Theory in the University of the Philippines College of Music and Assistant Professorial Lecturer in De La Salle – College of St. Benilde.

“Noise in Times of Trouble”: Senyawa, the *Alkisah* Network and the Decentralization of an Underground Music Community

Luigi Monteanni
SOAS University of London
10 Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London
e-mail: 694282@soas.ac.uk

Abstract

Senyawa are an avant-garde duo based in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, formed by singer Rully Shabara and poly instrumentalist Wukir Suryadi. Since 2010 they have released various studio albums and pursued one of the possible crossovers between Indonesian regional genres and transnational experimental popular music movements, thus becoming an inspiration for musicians operating in the field worldwide. Due to the restraints of pandemic isolation, for their 2020 album, *Alkisah*, Senyawa have invited multiple music labels, including my own, to participate by creating different versions of the work for different national markets. The authors encouraged variations on physical formats, promotional and distribution strategies and even reinterpretations of the songs. In Shabara's words, this choice was a political statement promoting decentralisation and mutual care across and beyond Southeast Asia (SEA) while aiming at moving away from the corporatized way music tends to be produced, showing that primary distribution channels are no longer the only option. Being at once an ethnomusicologist studying contemporary Indonesian music subcultures and a co-creator of this transnational work of art, I will account for the experience in two ways. First, through interviews I have conducted with Senyawa and various members of the enterprise, I will show how *Alkisah* proved to be an unprecedented case study able to reframe underground music communities in terms of delocalized support networks. Second, building on Rice and Baulch, I will show how creative participation and long-term engagement proved an ethical, profitable, methodology to attain ethnographic insight while making “ethnomusicology in times of trouble.”

Keywords: applied ethnomusicology, decentralisation, music, senyawa, underground,

Once upon a Time on the Internet: An Introduction

In 2020, during the global Covid-19 pandemic, I participated with my music label “Artetetra” in a collective work of art and global music co-production network named *Alkisah* (“once upon a time” in *bahasa Indonesia*, the Indonesian lingua franca). A title going after Indonesian avantgarde duo Senyawa's new album and related socio-musical enterprise. In this paper, I show how a long-term participatory approach in

this global artistic network has been a precious research device in two senses. First, it has allowed the researcher to attain deep online insight on a musical community of practice and, second, it has challenged assumptions related to the researcher's posture and to postmodern centre-periphery sociological models.

To illustrate this, in the first section I reconstruct the *Alkisah* Network's history and purposes, examining the insights provided by the experience about contemporary global underground communities. Then, in the second part, I show how the network evolved, producing evidence related to power networks and new ways to conduct practice-based research. This section will also be useful in proving how the centre-periphery sociologic model proposed by Baulch (2002) is apt to analyse and describe issues of agency and inequality in music communities and social groups at large. In the third and last part, by considering the work of Timothy Rice, I delineate how a posture privileging practice over theory is a useful tool for ethical activism and ethnomusicological analysis.

Senyawa and the “*Alkisah* Network”: Artistic Collectivism and Collective Activism

Senyawa are an avant-garde musical project composed by multi-instrumentalist Wukir Suryadi and singer Rully Shabara. Since 2010, they have released more than ten albums on labels like *Morphine Records* and *Sublime Frequencies*, pursuing one of the possible crossovers between Indonesian regional genres and transnational extreme music movements such as noise, metal, and punk, thus becoming an inspiration for musicians operating in the field worldwide.

On 19th September 2020, Senyawa inaugurated their second decade of activity by announcing a new album, *Alkisah*, through an open call on their social network accounts. The posts expressed the intention to share the work with independent labels worldwide to explore alternative music production and distribution methods, challenging the protocols of the music industry; a system mainly consisting of operations managed by single, usually rather corporatized music labels of; (a) audio production and post-production (such as mastering), (b) production of physical copies and merchandise through specialised companies, (c) distribution (both physical and digital) in record stores, online marketplaces and distros as well as digital platforms and musical services (such as Spotify, Deezer, Bandcamp and Soundcloud) through distribution and publishing companies and, last but not least, (d) promotion of the album through specialised press agencies.

To confront this productive structure, perceived by the duo as hierarchical, bureaucratized and centralized in economic return and copyright management, Senyawa gave the possibility to participants to realise their version of *Alkisah* as part of a collective work. While providing the album's audio masters and original artworks, the band encouraged imprints to independently decide the format, number of copies, graphics, production, distribution, and promotion strategies and opt for a different album mastering. The logic was to create a network to avoid overlap of distribution [...], minimize shipping distances, and empower smaller scattered powers to grow and connect (Senyawa, 2020).

The whole project idea came from the necessity of finding valid alternatives to the new, restraining social conditions caused by Covid-19. By letting scattered smaller imprints participate in the creative process, *Alkisah* was intended as a collective enterprise of cooperation towards a decentralised, fairer future¹. Investing the release with artistic and political significance (R. Shabara, personal communication, April 20, 2021). Senyawa exploited musical spontaneous, dialogic collaboration to question competitive market logics where capital—economic, political, symbolic, cultural—is often the determining asset (Kahn-Harris, 2004, p.106).

Nevertheless, *Alkisah* was not an ‘exercise in logistics.’ To stimulate variation and heterogeneity, making editions unique and context specific, Senyawa encouraged labels to include track(s) of remix/reinterpretation of the album by local artist(s) as part of the release (ibid. sic.). This approach generated a distinctive interplay between artistic networks on national and global scales. The guiding principle was that only the locals know what’s best for them (R. Shabara, personal communication, April 20, 2021). Variation expressed the idea of decentralization. Encouraging it meant striving for album production and reception focused on the concept of a horizontal diversity of individual approaches, practices, and interpretations. A perspective from which no edition is the original, not even Senyawa’s.

The duo gave participants a few guidelines to keep the project centred on its conceptual background and coordinate the imprints. Implicitly, the project required collaboration, mutual help, and interaction between parties through digital channels² and keeping track of the status of the operation. Explicitly, they gave four rules: first, imprints had to fill a form declaring how they would produce their version. Second, they had to refrain from uploading the album to music services³, an action granting the album’s intellectual property to a single party. Third, the album could be released only from a date decided by Senyawa. Last, only one label per state was initially allowed to avoid competition. A condition later renegotiated when in some countries more than one label responded to the open call.

The operation results were terrific in terms of numbers and imprints’ response, generating a spontaneous network of forty-four labels scattered across nations and continents. The worldwide album release produced and sold thousands of copies in different formats and generated more than 200 reworks. An endeavour which is arguably unprecedented in history, rivalling the quantities of most small and medium productions and engendering a plethora of peripheral but similarly important activities. The undertaking motivated labels to work creatively on a number of outputs including radio shows, official videos, online events, articles and even artefacts, declining possible elaborations of the project beyond one of the album’s releases.

¹ Hence, the defining motto of the release: “DECENTRALIZATION SHOULD BE THE FUTURE,” all capitalized. Senyawa use the term decentralisation to define a state of things where power, property and control is shared between the parts.

² Mainly, email services and the Discord platform.

³ The only time requiring Senyawa’s intervention was when one of the labels uploaded the album on the platform. A decision to which the duo responded ordering for it to be removed (R. Shabara, personal communication, April 20, 2021).

According to the band, *Alkisah* had an unequalled diffusion in the market and press worldwide⁴. Hence, making the entire project a success relatively to the initial assumptions and hopes.

On the 20th and 21st of February, after five months of constant online organisation and communication, the common effort was celebrated with an online release party named “*Pasar Alkisah*” (*Alkisah* market); A title underlining the centrality of each participant, more than of the album. Imprints were invited to present original works in the form of audio-visual content: reinterpretations of *Alkisah*, the label’s productions, original videos, talk shows or podcasts. All contributions coalesced in a non-stop forty-eight hour festival on the Twitch audio-visual streaming platform, during which artists and labels took part as they could assist the streaming, presenting their content, or engaging with the group chat. Participation and online presence (de Seta 2020, p. 85) was demanded by Senyawa at least during one’s own slot, in order to be there for fans, friends and collaborators. For Shabara (personal communication, April 20, 2021), *Pasar Alkisah* was the moment that best represented the project:

We didn’t control anything, and it has just run like that. This is what happens when you give the power for everybody to have. It became even a better festival than CTM, for example. Because you don’t feel any institution behind it. There are no rules or standard format. It’s just like that.

Yet, as optimistic as all may sound, Senyawa are pragmatic and critical. The aim of the project was not to “change the game”—something that for the duo is only remotely and theoretically possible—but to show that there are always alternatives, inspiring others to probe for different possibilities.

In fact, rather than exerting control over the labels’ behaviour the duo kept the enterprise flexible, making the parties responsible in evaluating all possibilities for themselves. As Shabara (personal communication, April 20, 2021), points out; If we had tried to control or restrain the distribution of power, the experiment would have failed because Senyawa still has power above everyone else, and that’s the whole idea. Nonetheless, the duo gave label decisional power to allow them to exert agency on the album’s distribution and reproduction and even towards possible hijacking and capitalization—choices made possible by the project’s ethos, albeit not supported by the band:

The experiment is not about decentralization but exclusivity rights, about power. Decentralization is just one method of doing this: let go of power. It means other people can have it too. You don’t lose that power. It’s just being shared.

Alkisah, then, is a conscious attempt at experimentally and collectively developing underground scenes. Articulating local ones with one another on a global level, oriented by a shared task and a set of loose guidelines, Senyawa use music as a catalyst for joint action and knowledge production and dissemination.

⁴ Especially for the unfolding logic of this chapter, it is fundamental to name at least The New York Times, The Wire, Pitchfork, Bandcamp, NME, Resident Advisor, Toneglow, The Quietus, Popmatters.

“Decentralised Centres”: Critical Nodes and Controversial Happenings

To critically confront this experience—while agreeing regarding the general success of the enterprise—which for me lies in the smoothness and efficacy of collective, independent self-organisation—like other participants, including Senyawa, I noticed how some of the happenings were, when not contradicting the operation’s rules, at least positioning awkwardly in relation to its logics. Among these we can mention seeing versions of the album available on Amazon, the apparition of foreign editions in Italian record stores and the inability of top tier press (principally based in the US and the UK) to represent the project in its complexity by largely privileging certain Western labels (in a network composed mostly of Asia-based imprints), which influenced internet indexing, hinting at issues of representation and agency (Matthes, 2021).

If we relate these hunches to Senyawa’s thoughts on globalization and technology, all the infrastructural and cultural biases and capital inequalities embedded power dynamics pervading the music industry at large resurface, from the mainstream to the underground. Here’s where the only weakness lies. This approach is limited by resource allocation in the current organisational structure of the music industry, narrowing the possibility of music diversification by enhancing the gate-keeping power of actors (Azenha, 2006; Tan, 2019).

Such occurrences seem to confirm theories by scholars such as Baulch (2002) regarding the relevance of centre-periphery social models even after globalization. While centre-periphery models suggested that geopolitics and social assemblages work as a network of centres and peripheries tasked with mediating the enforcement of Western cultural imperialism on their dwellers, recent sociological analyses such as the ones by Appadurai, Gilroy and Tomlinson portray global order as chaotic; random, disjunctive, disorganized, and fractured; a result of the diversification and complexification of capital’s global flows. Contrary to this view, in her analysis of alternative music in Indonesia, Baulch notices that although globalisation (may we say decentralization?) has brought simultaneous unification and diversification, hegemonic discourses and protocols still exert a considerable force on the field of action (2002). This equally applies to *Alkisah* when we consider the global system in which labels’ resources, image and modus operandi assumed increasing importance in the presentation and promotion of the release, partly defusing its oppositional potential. Overall, inequality of access to assets and geographic relevance proved that although some writers have considered the distinction of core and peripheral nations to be outdated, as global cultural flows have become more complex, in fact it seems [...] that there are still strong senses of exclusion and marginalisation at work in many places (Keil in Feld, 1998, p. 178).

Regardless, this is not negative judgement towards the enterprise. Despite the duo’s interest in the assessment of the project’s results, such evaluations are limiting. Senyawa perfectly knew that technologically facilitated decentralization doesn’t lead to industry-wide decentralisation when other aspects of the industry remain controlled and exclusive (Azenha, 2006). They also knew that one, willing or not, has to engage with capitalist modes of production in order to survive. In short, “success” was never the goal. Coherently with artistic practice (Ingold, 2018), *Alkisah* functioned exactly

as a collective experiment to develop and disclose local knowledge about our protocols and their by-products. During the process, it is practice that oriented theory and not the opposite.

“The Story is now yours to Tell”: A Conclusion

After delineating the context of the project and what kind of outcomes it produced, we can give several possible answers to the question; “Did the network work, and if so how?” First, of all, collaborations managed to generate shared value and impact by utilizing the network’s global-and-local reach. Conversely, sharing accumulated power with smaller imprints didn’t fully take off. Bigger labels never assisted nor facilitated the work of smaller ones, working to spread awareness on the process and practical aims of the community. On the other hand, the tone and extension of the enterprise helped promote the release especially for bigger players; the presence of smaller entities adding a layer of underground prestige and the resemblance of a tight community behind the release.

Secondly, where for some of the participants *Alkisah* was a tool to foster artistic communities, for others it was just another release—or worse, a new business model. As mentioned, not all participants strived to communicate, popularize and pursue *Alkisah*’s original goal. Most of them just focused on releasing the album. Indeed, most of the labels who adopted this mindset ended up not only downplaying the political implications of such an idea, but sometimes even jeopardising them by making the project’s envisioned logistics more difficult or just blatantly violating the only rules.

Nonetheless, despite its evident shortcomings, the network’s logistics worked perfectly, producing unprecedented attention, staggering numbers, and a thorough distribution. Besides, this musical and social network is not to be intended as an achievement, but just as a starting point; *Alkisah* is an infrastructure that can be developed, modified, replaced, and multiplied according to many different needs. It’s a path showing the manifold possibilities that letting go of control opens. Despite its obvious and predictable flaws, *Alkisah* has shown how experiments probe and test the limits of artistic practices and their ethos, of how art can become a tool to shed light on larger, uncharted portions of the map.

To conclude, to show the wider relevance of this experience in relation to ethnomusicological models of collective practices and contemporary possibilities for ethnomusicological research, I want to put in relation my experience of the *Alkisah* network with three points of inquiry proposed by ethnomusicologist Timothy Rice in his paper “Ethnomusicology in Times of Trouble” (2014).

In his article, Rice raises several questions regarding the possible or necessary differences between classic ethnomusicology, led mainly in stable settings and historical contexts, and one of times and places of trouble, where social disruption, violence, conflict, disease predominate. In the face of rising social challenges caused by both climate change and an increasingly precarious geopolitical scenario, Rice speculates on what kind of consequences an ethnomusicology in times of trouble should or could have on our methodology and gaze. In my opinion, the three most

poignant questions Rice (2014) asks are; (a) Will an ethnomusicology of times and places of trouble change our theories and methods in any way? (b) Can our understanding of the nature of music, built up in countless studies conducted in relatively peaceful, stable settings, prove helpful in ameliorating cases of conflict, violence, disease, and social disruption; and (c) How will the study of music in times and places of trouble affect our understanding of the nature of human music making? (p. 193).

Albeit in the safety of my room, the one I conducted during the *Alkisah* project definitely was an ethnomusicology in times of trouble; an ethnomusicology which methodology both had to adapt to the extreme social restrictions caused by Covid-19 and to respond to the economic and social damages that forced isolation had caused among musicians; reasons which made the network interesting and necessary in the first place. Therefore, I find the *Alkisah* network a useful case study able to shed light on possible answers to the issues explored by Rice. As we have seen, ethnomusicology in times of trouble sticks to practice and action. It's trying to act practically on actual conditions which generates knowledge and insight about the system we operate, unveiling the pitfalls of discourse.

Secondly, the most valuable lesson that we can apply from music in times of peace is that music making is always opaque and undetermined. Although music can be defined as "organized sound" (Godt, 2005, p. 84), that organization is never necessary, let alone rational; it just finds its way along and around a series of rules, be they stylistic, logistic, or political.

Third, *Alkisah* shows that "musicking" can modulate multiple dimensions of human experience at once: knowledge, power, politics, creativity, subsistence etc., depending on the actors' engagement and priorities regarding certain aspects of music making. *Alkisah*'s release process was intended to be the same for everybody, yet the work has been framed more as a political act or as a simple new addition to the catalogue according to participants' attitudes.

Ultimately, an ethnomusicology in times and places of trouble should keep at heart ethnomusicologist's Charles Keil words: rather than saying that we need to think through the fixed concepts in order to grasp the groove [...] it's the reverse; we need to groove more in order to break open some concepts, drop others, keep all mere ideas at a safe distance (Feld, 1988, p. 104). Following the experience illustrated in this paper, I argue that whether we're swaying to the music pumped out a nasty P.A. in a dim lit basement or listening to hours of pre-recorded materials stored in a far-off server, *Alkisah* teaches us that we should embrace the path of knowing by doing or, better, discovering by trying.

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Biography

Luigi Monteanni is a Ph.D. candidate in music studies at SOAS University of London and winner of an AHRC CHASE scholarship. He is a researcher studying the relationships between contemporary transnational pop music genre- specifically metal and experimental music - and regional music. He is also the co-founder of Artetetra Records, a publishing label and collective pursuing practice-based inquiries regarding the notions of digital folklore and exoticism in late globalisation. Luigi has collaborated with Norient, Senyawa, The Wire, Terraforma, Club to Club, Tarawangsawelas.

Transitioning from Tenor to Baritone Through the Lens of an Amateur Singer

Oskar Musaev
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
e-mail: ockapakco@gmail.com

Abstract

Identifying one's vocal range whether tenor or baritone is challenging when a singer's voice quality overlaps categories. Amateur singers significantly benefit in knowing one's range identity to improve selection of repertoire and can optimize performance. This paper examines the approaches in facilitating a change in vocal fach while also gaining insight to the singing technique and stylistic demands in repertoire for change of vocal fach. It also provides recommendations on suitable repertoire for facilitating the transition of vocal fach. The study uses a practice-led and artistic research approach whereby action, reflections, and improvements on performance were fundamental to problem solving. In transitioning from a tenor to a baritone, I argue for the importance of solidifying and centralizing the concentration of the voice towards the middle of the upper vestibule, where the upper lips and upper teeth are. Relaxation of the lower jaw and the rest of the muscles in the torso is necessarily in achieving this transition. I also posit that one must explore beyond the western classical singing style in order to maximize his voice to accommodate the variety of new techniques demanded in current singing repertoires.

Keywords: artistic reflection, baritone repertoire, breathing technique, practice-led research, singing, vocal performance

Introduction

Identifying one's vocal range whether tenor or baritone may be a challenging endeavour when the singer's voice quality tends to overlap both categories. For an amateur singer it will be significantly constructive to know one's voice range identity to enhance selection of repertoire or optimize performance (Reid, 1983).

Background

My vocal journey through my voice degree studies provided impression that recitals centered around satisfying the expectations to display a classic ringing timbre typical of a tenor voice associate with *bel canto* technique (Celetti, 1996). This produces some results in my singing which gained approval from mentors but did not entirely

convince me that I was indeed a tenor. The reason for this was due to my observation at my attempts at pieces meant for the tenor voice while my entire singing process was physically challenging. This led me to also believe that I was weak and simply needed more practice and being a tenor was something that can be attained. After my graduation, I did not resume my vocal classes and had a brief break from singing lessons. During this break, my then future vocal coach heard me during a performance and suspected that I was a baritone after hearing my voice timbre. I decided to try out lessons with her and she facilitated my shift to repertoire for the baritone voice.

In my previous vocal studies, I placed much emphasis on attaining a high G (G4), however, I consistently failed to achieve this, and felt compelled to keep trying to achieve this by using the same unsuccessful approach. This resulted in me being unclear about what good singing should be like and more importantly, how I should sound when I sing well. The only available examples put forth for me by my teacher then as ideals to look up to were *bel canto* trained famous singers such as Luciano Pavarotti and Jerry Hadley. When I tried to emulate this kind of pure *bel canto* sound, in almost in every instance, I developed fatigue in the laryngeal muscles. As a young singer, I lacked adequate instructions and a clear direction as to what the actual problem was in my singing and how I could overcome it. I was not sure if the problem was occurring during my personal practice, private classes or performances. The same problem was present on all occasions regardless of whether I sang in a classical setting or in a contemporary one, perhaps as this was the only way I knew how to sing (Nguyen, 2015).

I clearly remember when my first vocal coach asked me to start talking like a tenor (with a higher resonance and pitch), in the effort to classify me in a certain category that is best described as a typical tenor; the lower the note, the smaller the resonance, without using too much chest voice to produce the sound, and the higher the notes, the more head and open voice I should use by directing the sound through the 'back of the throat and towards the forehead.' From what I understood, I was asked to switch to the falsetto register and was encouraged to talk in that register. As a result, I completely ignored my lower range, or modal register, because I did not have the opportunity to develop it. Instead, my practice sessions were focused on attempts to reach the high notes while trying to 'sound like a tenor.' This resulted in my singing becoming forced, loud and limited in the higher range due to an incorrect technical approach. A beautiful voice cannot be achieved when a singer consistently sings in an incorrect part of their vocal range. Yet a few years later, when I was performing at a concert, my future vocal teacher was in the audience and told me that she suspected that I have a tessitura that must be within the range of a baritone since it did not resonate as comfortably as a tenor would. After taking lessons with her, she explained to me that I am a baritone who is able to sing the low and middle range with ease, and that the difficulties I had with reaching the top notes were due to an incorrect technical approach.

After a change of vocal teacher, the subsequent approach to my singing and the reclassification of my voice to a baritone, I experienced significantly less tension and stopped forcing my high notes. On a psychological level, the higher notes became more of a friend to me rather than a subject of fear as I started to believe that they can be attained through a different technical approach. The new approach I learned is

when singing notes in the high part of my range, the vocal resonance has to be increasingly shifted to the mouth cavities away from the larynx. Before this, whenever I had to sing high notes, I unconsciously dropped the voice into the back of the larynx because of two main reasons; firstly, a developed fear of letting go of my modal voice which would often result in an uncomfortable sound when attempting high notes, and secondly, I was previously taught to approach high notes like a tenor. When I used to sing as a tenor, I felt relatively comfortable in the middle and lower range, however never so in the higher range. I developed a fear of notes higher than G. Reclassification of my voice to a baritone allowed me to embrace my lower and middle range and take an optimal approach towards singing high notes.

By comparison as I juxtapose the state of my vocal journey to a few years later in another university while undertaking a Master's programme during the first semester recital, there have been a number of changes in my singing and my understanding of it. From my previous ambiguous understanding, I had a more specific series of realizations during my preparation for the first semester and subsequently during my preparation for the second one—a further understanding of the interrelationship of the circumstances around the singer and their direct and indirect effects on the sound produced.

During my first semester, due to studying with a new teacher, I became increasingly aware of the importance of vocal placement which refers to the physical sensations of vibration and movement of air that occurs as a product of the singing process. In my situation, my teacher urged me to maintain this concentration of vibration and movement of air towards a point which moves along the contour of the hard palette towards an inch in front of the upper lip. My understanding of the purpose for this visualization is to concentrate the sound or voice at an advantageous location in the head which allows my voice easy access into cavities that exist in the head, mouth, larynx and chest. Psychologically this proved to be of assistance, as I experienced a significant difference as my voice felt and sounded to me and to other listeners, more stable. Due to this new found knowledge, my singing was focused largely on training myself to adopt this method and keep it consistent.

In the second semester, I began to face another important aspect of singing which also affected it profoundly; the involuntary behavior of the muscles in my body that affected every performance. Besides that, another highly important aspect of singing I was almost entirely unaware of was the role of the rest of the body during the singing process. How not only the sensations in the vocal resonators mattered but also sensations that occurred in the torso and limb areas. I learned that the basis of correct and natural breathing which I needed is complete relaxation of as many muscles as possible in order to find the most efficient way of using the most suitable muscles to breathe naturally (Linklater, 2006). Some insight into the Alexander Technique was enough to get me started to work on balancing the weight of my head and using it to help me achieve my task instead of doing the opposite, which was being unaware of the balance of the weight of my head, and as a result of it, a combination of muscles in my body had been constrained as I was doing the action of singing. The result was evident; every recital I became more and more aware of the importance of consistency—physically, mentally and psychologically. I realised that all three are interrelated and are like dominoes; when one malfunctions it triggers

the other one in a similar way. Throughout the year, I have performed in a few recitals in different circumstances. Looking back at the results of each recital I believe it is possible to explain in a logical manner from the first hand encounter point of view of the participant/subject of research to benefit anyone else in similar circumstances.

Problem Statement

During my transition from tenor to baritone I encountered the following problem. The first problem was a difference in my personal breathing techniques required to sing as a baritone as compared with as a tenor. The problem I encountered was that my breathing was too forced when I sang as a tenor. I needed to re-learn to breathe, this time effectively as a baritone. This meant that my breathing technique (which is an essential part of singing) was inefficient. An inefficient breathing technique can affect the progress of a young singer adversely. Secondly, the inconsistency of hearing my voice by myself and how it actually sounds like for someone else outside my body. According to scientific research we hear a deeper version of our own voice through the resonance in our bones as compared to what others hear through the resonance in the air outside our mouth. The difference between the perception of our voice through bone conduction (how we perceive our voice with our own ears during vocalization) and air conduction (how anybody else hears our voice mainly from the vibrations in the air) has been sparsely investigated. Thirdly, it is common knowledge that many vocal instructors use various methods and techniques to teach the technicalities and expressions of singing. There is no ultimate method that encompasses every aspect of singing and there is a consistent occurrence of vagueness in the teaching instructions of obscure and well-known vocal instructors alike.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to (a) examine approaches to facilitate a change in vocalfach, (b) gain competency of the singing technique and stylistic demands in repertoire for change of vocalfach, and to (c) perform and reflect upon the suitability of a variety of repertoire that will facilitate the transition of vocalfach.

In approaching this degree and charting the journey being undertaken at this critical time in my vocal development, this research also focuses on the following questions; (a) As a young singer how does one rest assured which breathing technique is truly suitable in order to build a long lasting and sustainable voice technique? (b) What is a reliable way for a young singer to monitor his/her own voice without neglecting the other particularities picked up by an outsider's ear? (c) How does a young singer stay aware of what is going on inside his/her body during singing as he or she navigates through different instructors and institutions with various requirements?

Methodology

This research uses the practice-led and artistic-led approach toward problem solving (Penny, 2014; Smith & Dean, 2009). The terms practice-led and artistic-led are used interchangeably as both literature on practice-led research and the empirical content of this artistic-led research are essentially compatible (Coessens et al., 2009). Practice-led research is a fairly new research paradigm, yet it is becoming increasingly accepted in the academic world. This is an autoethnographic exploration of my singing journey within the artistic research frame (Kozel, 2013). It is a reflection, as well as a juxtaposition of my past and current experiences as a vocalist, including my personal recollections and as well as reflective writing about my current singing repertoire (Claxton, 2000; Rubidge, 2004). The study includes findings in relation to the chosen theories, in addition to empirical content gathered from performed repertoires that are discussed in this dissertation. The details of the repertoires are stated in the third chapter. I also used an approach that combined artistic practice reflection and the double loop learning methods is aimed at producing new knowledge that is relevant to my unique situation. The combination of my accumulated singing practical experience and the application of the results of juxtaposed reflection as an insider and outsider causes the outcome of information produced to be significantly more relevant for my development as a singer than just drawing from a single loop learning mindset which limits my thoughts to direct instructions I previously received, without questioning their purpose when necessary (Argyris & Schön, 1978). Few practical references exist that offer an alternative, practical and reliable learning method that have undergone a documented personal test and review by the artist that applies it, to aid in learning singing for young developing singers who find the conventional single loop learning method to be less effective than for other singers. The choice of repertoire for analysis and performance was limited to those that aided a developing baritone. The pieces were not highly virtuosic but were suitable to assist me in transitioning from a tenor to a baritone. Due to distance, the singer did not have the privilege of free access to a rich pool of vocal specialists. During the earlier period of the singer's vocal studies the young age and maturity of the singer were of significance.

Results and Findings

Technique

I argue for the importance of solidifying and centralizing the concentration of the voice towards the middle of the upper vestibuli, where the upper lips and upper teeth are. Also equally important is the relaxation of the lower jaw and the rest of the muscles in the torso is necessarily in achieving this transition. With regards to a successful and effective performance and practice method or drive to bring a singer on the journey of change of the vocal *fache* from tenor to baritone, through my experience, the most important goal is to start with this technique. After I have done so, I have felt the difference in my sound and sensations. The sound changed to one more capable of reaching low notes and resonating further. The sensations I felt were

rumbles or vibrations in my chest cavity when I sang or used my voice. The changing of the vocal *fache* occurred naturally at its own nature-designated time, while my personal adaptation to my natural vocal *fache* had to occur only with my own initiative to ‘facilitate’ this type of singing. The reason I changed from tenor to baritone is simply because my voice is much more comfortable and is able to produce optimal results within the baritone range (Cotton, 2007).

Encounter of Problems in Performances

I encountered problems with technique offstage and especially onstage because technique for me was much too vague to grasp and it became a mental and psychological barrier to the development of the whole singing process and the *fache* (Han, 2006). Also technique has to vary depending according to the genre of the song performed. A traditionally taught *Bel Canto* technique from the Classical Western approach to music cannot entirely equip an aspiring young singer who wants to maximize his voice to a variety of genres within the frameworks of the natural ability of the nature given voice without damaging it (Linklater, 2006).

In my personal experience, applying a classical technique of singing often backfired against the contemporary music settings I was required to sing in, which resulted in vocal fatigue and strain on the vocal folds. Therefore, what I needed is a mixed approach that includes modern vocal styles and patterns laid out organically on top of a tried and tested vocal technique which is the *Bel Canto Method* (Rubin, 2006).

Upon reflection and discussion with my advisor, I decided to explore the ways that the identified problems could be solved. The problems were identified through Recital 1 and Recital 2 was used as a platform to apply those improvements on the problems in Recital 1. As I explored, I realized that the repertoire choice in Recital 2 played a key role in helping me transition as a Baritone from a Tenor. The repertoire choice also served as a directional guide in all the aspects that were noted in the Insider and Outsider reflections of the reflective journal. As I explored, I gained back the confidence that I as a singer needed to keep developing within my natural voice *fach* (McGinnis, 2010).

I also posit that one has to explore beyond the western classical singing style in order to maximize his voice to accommodate the variety of new techniques demanded in current singing repertoires. I would recommend that repertoire is chosen based on a maximum variety of genres accessible within the frameworks of the natural voice of the singer. The extent of difficulty should reach towards a certain degree where the technical limitations can be solved with appropriate vocal technique. In my repertoire I have discovered that it is possible to loosely categorize the type of pieces into three branches, the first being a uniquely tailored piece for Baritone such as Deh Vienni Alla Finestra and Yeletsky’s Aria. Secondly, songs that encourage an unsophisticated, natural sound such as “O What a Beautiful Mornin’” and the Ukrainian folk song from the first recital. Thirdly, the modern pieces. A part of them do encourage the Baritone *fache* such as “Luck be a Lady” and others require a special approach through the control of breathing to prepare the Baritone voice for multiple occurrences of notes in the top range. As a result of the first recital I chose not to

repeat a piece that demanded such high notes as I was confident I was able to reach them if I needed them as a baritone.

Conclusion

It is a challenge to identify or classify a singer's vocal fach, especially when the natural voice crosses two or more different types of fach. The accurate classification of an amateur singer's voice significantly helps to guide the selection of performance programme and to improve the overall stage performance. This paper talks about the ways to guide a singer in the process of changing the vocal fach as well as diving into the technique and stylistic requirements of a programme sung by a singer going through a change in vocal fach. It also mentions suitable pieces that help guide a singer going through the mentioned vocal fach transition. The methods used are practice led and artistic research where the problems are solved through a system of action, reflections and improvement. For an amateur singer going through the change from a tenor to a baritone I stress the importance of solidifying and centralizing the concentration of the voice towards the middle of the upper vestibule, where the upper lips and upper teeth are. The lower jaw has to be always relaxed and the rest of the muscles in the torso have to be relaxed as much as possible in order to allow this transition to be successful. I would like to emphasize that amateur singers explore beyond one genre to achieve the goal in maximizing the vocal abilities in terms of technique and repertoire.

Acknowledgement

This paper was based on my Masters of Performance degree at Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris.

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**Proceedings of the 4th International Music & Performing Arts Conference:
Trending Digital Virtual and Capital
© Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, 2022**

e ISBN 978-967-0050-96-6



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