

TRANSDISCIPLINARY AND TRANSCULTURAL PERFORMANCE BETWEEN TAIWAN AND AUSTRIA

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The collaboration with artists, scholars and cultural managers in Taiwan between 5th and 24th of September 2017 was intense and many-sided. As it appears to be rather typical for Taiwan, besides the planned activities a multitude of unplanned occasions and interesting perspectives occurred on the way.

The concept of the concert with the Taipei Grass Mountain Folk Orchestra (headed by Prof. Tsun-Shin Huang / Chinese Culture University Taiwan) on September 10th, 2017 in the Recital Hall of Taipei National Concert Hall aimed to find new ways of musical expression on the basis of traditional Chinese instruments and playing techniques in order to create a bridge between past and present as well as between different cultural premises. This implied on one hand the creation of a new artistic space with the help of methods of composition, notation and live electronic sound processing, which would give the involved musicians enough freedom to include traditional ways of sound articulation into a more contemporary context. On the other hand the collaboration also developed into including a socio-political dimension, partly through including videos of the Iranian / Austrian visual artist Mahdiah Bayat.

In this way a program of new compositions for Chinese instruments by composers from Taiwan and Austria was presented, which opened a wide range of perspectives: The world premieres of for compositions by Johannes Kretz took a central role and also required the development of various artistic approaches. In black tide echo for erhu, pipa, dizi, guzheng, Chinese ensemble and live electronics the musicians together realized a drone-like sound scape with continuous development. This drone was transformed with the help of live electronics in a particular way: selected songs from the Tao, an indigenous Taiwanese minority living on Lanyu island (Orchid island), were analysed with regard to their microtonal pitch curves. This analysis was then used to modify the sound of instruments in the concert in a subtle way. (The recordings of the Tao songs could not directly be heard by the audience, only their indirect effects – how they modified the instrumental sounds in the hall – were exposed. This approach was not merely a technical experiment. In the sense of artistic research the idea was rather the verification of a hypothesis: Since the Tao regard the structuring and articulation of certain melodies from their tradition as direct representation of the nature of ocean waves, the transformation of the instrumental drones in the concert hall based on the analysis of specific Tao melodies should have the effect of introducing the perception of ocean waves into the music. The numerous audience was able to perceive this effect quite clearly.

In soundspace dreamland for Chinese ensemble and live electronics special aspects played an important role. The musicians were split into three groups of four musicians each (4 PIPAs, 4 ERhus, 4 DIZIs). Each group performed a specific musical material, which was handed over from player to player in time. Nevertheless, the complexity of the material was increased from round to round with particular embellishments. In this way interleaved rotating movements manifested and delved into a spiral of sound progressions.

The composition parallel universe carousel for Chinese Ensemble challenged the musicians in a different way. In this work the musical structures were developed together in real time. Based on given musical motives the musicians received instructions through an iPad remotely controlled through WLAN, inviting them to change their behaviour constantly. Each of four different groups of musicians was confronted with various categories of instructions. Through a combination of styles (traditional Chinese, contemporary), emotions (sad, happy, aggressive, peaceful) and gestures (up, down, repeating, wavelike) the composer was able to influence a highly complex architecture of sounds in real time. Performers and composer entered an exciting dialogue (one could even say: a “cat and mouse game”).

Finally the composition act pure for Chinese ensemble, live electronics and video guided back into reality. The video by Mahdieh Bayat showed the issue of a nuclear waste facility on Lanyu island (orchid island, Taiwan) visually, also in opposition to the fact that Taipei city is getting cleaner and cleaner. The interaction of visual and musical performance created an expression of socio-political responsibility.

After the concert on Sept. 10th various opportunities of intense thought exchange continued, for example with colleagues of National Dong Hwa University in Hualien. This university has a strong focus on the issues of indigenous groups in Taiwan. Currently the foundation of a new university for indigenous knowledge in Taiwan is prepared there. This project is particularly interesting in the context of the activities of Wei-Ya Lin (ethnomusicology) and Johannes Kretz (composition, artistic research), who can look back on 12 years of collaboration with indigenous groups, artists and scholars. Furthermore, since Austrian art universities have a strong experience in developing those concepts, which allow to extend academic systems through additional concepts of knowledge production (those exceeding spoken/written academic language), this might lead to promising future collaborations. (The concept of “Entwicklung und Erschließung der Künste” / “development and advancement of the arts” as introduced for the transitions of art academies into universities might play a key role here).

This thought exchange provided interesting perspectives for all participants, who are very interested in future collaborations. In the same way the meeting with the head of the Museum of Contemporary Art Taipei was promising. MOCA will host the prize winners of the coming Pulima prize for Taiwanese indigenous artists.

Finally, an invitation by Prof. Wen-Yea Lu for giving a guest lecture at the Taipei National University of the Arts – for colleagues and students of composition and of musicology – presenting the approach of Johannes Kretz and Wei-Ya Lin of integrating of indigenous music traditions and contemporary forms of composition completed the project.

現代音畫遙思

維也納現代藝術大師

2017
09/10 sun. PM14:30
國家演奏廳
臺北市中山南路 21-1 號

作曲、電子樂 / Johannes Kretz 畫家 / Mahdieh Bayat

傳統國樂結合 現代音樂 與 畫作藝術

Johannes Kretz 《Act Pure》委託創作 ·
《Black tide echo》 ·
《Soundscape dreamland》 ·
《Parallel universe carousel》 ·
曲文軍 《涓水情》 ·
高松華 《咏》 ·
許燧煜 《星空·阿納赫塔夏》 ·
羅永暉 《蠶》 ·
趙松庭 《鷓鴣飛》 ·
曲大衛 《紅土印象》 ·

琵琶 陳美芳
揚琴 黃瑾瑩
二胡 林聖亮
古箏 許燧煜
琵琶 田鴻秀
二胡 張基航
笛 蘇文靜

Johannes Kretz
國立維也納音樂表演藝術大學作曲與電音學院院長
Mahdieh Bayat
伊朗籍旅居維也納著名藝術家

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