

Journal of Urban Culture Research

The Art of Development: Exploring the Role of
Culture and the Arts in Sustainable Community
Development and Social Transformation

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Welcoming Message from the Executive Director

Suppakorn Disatapandhu⁺

Welcome to the first issue of The Journal of Urban Culture Research for 2010, a peer-reviewed journal published once a year in September by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University and Urban Research Plaza associated with Osaka City University. Our first issue is on the theme of Art Development: Exploring the Role of Culture and the Arts in Sustainable Community Development and Social Transformation, guest edited by Professor Kjell Skyllstad from University of Oslo. The concept for the issue initially arose out of the “Empowering Urban Culture and Creativity: Art, Publicity, and Transformation” Forum held at Chulalongkorn University’s Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, in March 2010. The success of this forum was a clear indication of the remarkable growth in urban studies and art development in recent years. This forum inspired the very first issue of our new journal.

As initial discussions began, we became aware of a number of recent and forthcoming parallel publications within urban studies and arts development, as well as the launch of a new international journal in the area of urban studies and culture in Japan. This confirmed for us the relevance of the theme and the importance of publishing a volume that would explore the many different facets of creative arts, visual arts, music, various genres of dance, and the relationships between the arts and urban culture. This emphasis on the relationships between the arts and urban culture is the main focus of the journal.

We are grateful for the cooperation between Chulalongkorn University’s Office of Academic Affairs, and the Urban Research Plaza associated with Osaka City University in providing financial support to the operating costs. We are also grateful to our guest editors and editorial board members for their sustained and dedicated effort in bringing this issue to fruition. With their combined expertise in ethnomusicology, fashion design, choreography, music composition, art history, and urban studies they have put together a volume, which explores art development from a variety of disciplinary and methodological perspectives. We hope that you find the result to be a rich, varied, and stimulating issue.

Looking ahead to 2011, our second volume will remain focused on cities and creativity. Our journal will serve as a platform for those teaching in higher education and postgraduate students in the arts to publish their research. We encourage all artists to send in their submissions, comments, and ideas, including suggestions for the journal. Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to bring to your attention the next forum on urban culture research, which is a two-day event with a theme of Art Management – City Management: Models for Sustainable City Renewal and Cultural Continuity to be held at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok from March 3-4, 2011. A call for papers, the journal’s policies, and contact details are posted on the journal’s website, www.cujucr.com.

We look forward to seeing you at our forum and learning about your work.

⁺ Dr. Suppakorn Disatapundhu, Dean and Associate Professor, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalongkorn University Phayathai Road, Pathumwan, Bangkok, Thailand 10330. voice: 622-218-4582, fax: 662-218-4563, email: suppakornd@yahoo.com

Contents

- 3 Welcoming Message from the Executive Director
Suppakorn Disatapandhu
- 6 Editorial
Kjell Skyllstad
- 10 Journal Policy

Sharing Art Across the Continents - Art, Dialogue and Development in the Time of HM King Chulalongkorn

- 16 The Siamese Composer Eugène Cinda Grassi Bangkok 1881 - Paris 1941
Philippe de Lustrac (France)

Developing Creativity – Theoretical Discourses

- 40 Shaping a Creative Milieu: *Creativity, Process, Pedagogy, Leadership, and Place*
Tom Borrup (USA)

The Art of Development - The Development of Art

- 60 Transposition: *A Project for Cultural Change*
Geir Johnson (Norway)
- 74 The Progression of Art in Bangkok's Public Spaces
Kamol Phaosavasdi (Thailand)
- 88 Destiny of Traditional Folk Arts in Conditions of Recent Society:
The Case of Vietnam
Thanh To Ngoc (Vietnam)

Art and Transformation - Models of Art Outreach Programs for Individual and Social Rehabilitation and Development

- 96 Developing Urban Creative Communities Through The Arts in Thailand,
Canada, and USA
Frances Anderson (USA)
- 118 Dialogic Performance: *Towards a Pedagogy of Transformance*
Dan Baron Cohen (Brazil)
- 128 Dance House: *European Models of Folk Music and Dance Revival in Urban Settings*
Svanibor Pettan (Slovenia)

Music and Well-being in the City – Developing Urban Health Care in Asia

- 138 Beyond Entertainment: *Music and Health Care in Urban Parks*
Bussakorn Binson (Thailand)
- 148 Community Music Therapy in Action: *Healing Through Pirit Chanting in Sri Lanka*
Lasanthi Manaranjanie Kalinga Dona (Sri Lanka)

Art and Survival - Our Endangered Cultures

- Vanishing echoes 160
Victoria Vorreiter (USA)

Recent Research Projects

- Yaoi as Fanwork: *Cultural Appropriation in Modern Japanese Culture* 170
Yu Ishikawa (Japan)
- Playing Techniques of New Pieces of Koto Music in Japanese Urban Culture 178
Kumkom Pornprasit (Thailand)
- The Historical Representation of Place in the Military Base Town of Koza:
The "Reassessment" of US Military Presence as a Developmental Resource 190
Takashi Yamazaki (Japan)

Conference Reports

- Report on the 8th Academic Forum, *Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand, March 2010* 202
Pornprapit Phoasavadi (Thailand)
- Reflections on UNESCO 2nd World Conference on Arts Education, *Seoul, South Korea, May 2010* 204
Michele and Robert Root-Bernstein (USA)
- Rekindling the Torch: *Report on the 29th International Society for Music Education (ISME) World Conference Beijing, China, August 2010* 208
Kjell Skylstad (Norway)
- Believing in Miracles: *The Rebirth of a City, Report from Singapore World City Summit, June 2010* 210
Kjell Skylstad (Norway)

Editorial

Kjell Skylstad⁺

Editor in Chief

We live in a world of rapid urbanization. In 1950 the world had only one megacity – New York. Today Asia has more than half of the world's largest cities, including 10 megacities: Bangkok, Beijing, Jakarta, Karachi, Kolkhata, Mumbai, Osaka, Seoul, Shanghai, and Tokyo. According to UN estimates, the proportion of the world's population living in cities will rise from today's 50 percent to 70 percent by 2050. Every week sees more than a million people moving to the cities. Ninety percent of expected population growth is projected to be concentrated in the cities. Southeast Asia is steadily urbanizing. In 1950 only 15 percent lived in cities, while today more than 40 percent of the population lives in urban areas, with the numbers rapidly rising, mainly due to influx from rural areas.

This rapid process of urbanization is accompanied by equally rapid social and cultural changes affecting all aspects of life. As pointed out by the Centre for Livable Cities and ASEAN Studies Centre at the Singapore World City Summit (June 2010) there is a marked shift from living in an extended family to nuclear family accommodations in the growing Asian cities. One could add that the close intergenerational contact, which constituted the very foundation for the transfer of cultural values and knowledge as well as artistic skills from one generation to the next, is often lost through the isolation caused by split living arrangements even within one household. A life style built on a sufficiency economy, which supported local craftsmanship and transfer of knowledge is replaced by an urban consumerist ideology.

City authorities throughout the region feel the pressure to modernize, which results in a steady decline and loss of heritage sites and cultural traditions through the demolishing of old buildings in the city centers and rapid replacement by high rise complexes.

So acknowledging these negative consequences of rapid urban growth, why do city planners not come up with programs for sustainable development that would also promote cultural continuity? The answer is that cities and towns in the region are largely self-organizing instead of planned. Where plans exist they are often disregarded by private entrepreneurs within a system of a profit-driven market economy that also disregards public interest. This privatization of urban planning has also resulted in a division between a growing middle-class of well-to-do citizens and those living at the geographical, social and economic margins.

⁺ Dr. Kjell Skylstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway

The Asian development bank points to the sad fact that between 240 and 260 million people in Asia's urban areas live on less than 1 USD a day. This is one-third of the total number of absolute poor in Asia, which in turn accounts for about 70 percent of those living in dire poverty throughout the world. Most of them seek out a living in degraded squatter settlements on the edges of large cities. It is estimated that the population of these slums will grow by an average of 110 million people every year, reaching about 700 million by 2015.

It seems that in this self-destructive process we are nearing a critical point of no return. However, just at this moment, there is another worldwide concern that has necessitated a profound soul searching among city administrators – the issue of grave environmental degradation. Again the Asian Development Bank discloses that cities occupy 2 percent of the world's land but consume 75 percent of its resources and produce a similar percentage of its waste in addition to 80 percent of carbon dioxide emissions. This year Asian cities have experienced unprecedented effects of global warming, including devastating landslides, floods, heat waves, and shortages of potable water. No doubt these problems have motivated and propelled a movement to implement intra- and interdepartmental city planning initiatives, and to enact necessary legislation with a vision of one day making their cities livable for all citizens.

Moreover, in this vision, cultural workers and institutions, artists and art educators have a definite role to play. A study of the cultural preferences of Nobel Prize awardees from all scientific disciplines discloses a level of personal artistic proficiency and activity far exceeding that of the population at large. Throughout the centuries, artists have been at the forefront of initiating cultural, social, and economic development on the local and global arenas. Furthermore, where city planners have chosen to cooperate with art institutions in implementing daring proposals for urban rehabilitation, results have been achieved that exceed all expectations.

An experience that prompted a report in this journal was the awarding of the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize or what is also called, "The Nobel Prize for Cities" to Bilbao, Spain at the Singapore World City Summit in June 2010. The city's Mayor told a stunned audience the success story of a city reborn, the story of a reinvented and regenerated city. This is a model for inclusive city development.

The disastrous decline of the formerly thriving industrial town had led to an equally serious social crisis. The outlook for the future could not have been more bleak and hopeless. Then by a stroke of luck, the Guggenheim museum was looking for a European venue to build a museum. Here is where we saw our chance, the Mayor explained. "We built an art museum in the middle of a crisis and a ruined city. In times of crises it is time to invest and this investment paid off. The most audacious art project conceivable was paid for within three years and the city was reborn."

In university cities the art faculties have been seen to take the lead in devising projects for city development. There is a great and immediate demand for research in all areas connected to the place of arts and culture in urban and regional planning, which in most countries has suffered from ineffective leadership and a lack of clear and measurable goals.

Just let me mentioned a few of these open fields:

- What is the role of the arts in urban planning and community development?
- How can the arts contribute to the creative re-imagining and revitalization of a city?
- What are good practices of sustainable city renewal?
- How can the arts contribute to building social cohesion and bridging cultural divides?
- How can the art communities contribute to cultural continuity?
- How can the arts stimulate participatory citizenship and social interaction?
- What role can culture and the arts play in stimulating economic development?

The Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok has now for more than a decade, actively pursued an agenda of community outreach initiatives like the Art for All project described in this issue. We are likewise proud to report on the groundbreaking Declaration of the Cooperation by Bangkok Metropolitan Administration and Alliances in the Fields of Art and Culture. The declaration was put to a decisive test when the Ministry of Culture immediately after the recent upheavals in the city, called on the artist communities for assistance in implementing a project for reconciliation. A hundred artists spontaneously responded and came up with the Imagine Peace project and shortly thereafter its exposition opened in the Bangkok Culture Center.

With the establishment of a cooperative link with the Urban Research Plaza and the Urban Culture Research center of Osaka City University a new page was turned in the history of this prestigious institution. This year, the eighth in a series of annual international academic conferences exploring the whole open field of urban culture research was held at the Maha Chulalongkorn Building at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok resulting in the publication of accepted papers in its book of proceedings.

Furthermore, the University and Faculty administration building on their experiences gained from the eight yearly forums, and in consultation with our international partners, has decided to go a step further to meet the demand for directions in urban planning in a critical new phase of rapid urban growth. Therefore on behalf of all parties involved and not least the editorial board and international reviewers who have dedicated themselves fully to the task, I hereby

have the honor of introducing the first volume of our interdisciplinary and international peer-reviewed Journal of Urban Culture Research and its supporting online edition.

As you will observe, the thematic focus for this volume was chosen in commemoration of the work of the great city planner and pioneer in urban development HM King Chulalongkorn. We hope through this issue to give the concept of the “creative city” which is almost a household expression, a new and more concrete substance that will lead to increased research activities across the region and the world in a field where guidance is in eager demand.

Journal Policy

About JUCR

The Journal of Urban Culture Research is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal published annually by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with the Urban Research Plaza of Osaka City University, Japan.

The Aims of JUCR

This Journal aims at establishing a broad interdisciplinary platform for studies of cultural creativity and the arts. It embraces all areas whether it is visual arts, creative arts, music, dance, theater or urban studies related to creative expression.

Additionally the Journal has the objective of stimulating both the theory and practice of fine and applied arts in response to social challenges and environmental issues as well as calling for solutions across the creative realms. Moreover, the Journal supports advocacy processes, improvements in practices, and encourages supportive public policy-making related to cultural resources.

Submission Requirements

- All submissions need to address at least one relevant theme announced prior to each issue. Contributions are welcome from researchers and practitioners at all stages in their careers.
- Manuscripts should not exceed 7,000 words including the title, abstract, and references. Tables, figures, and illustrative material are accepted only when necessary for support.
- Manuscripts should be typed, double-spaced with 1" (2.5 cm) margins, and submitted in 10-font Verdana, as Word documents only (.doc). Any other document format (PDF, HTML, etc.) will be returned to the author(s) for reformatting. See website for template: www.cujucr.com
- Manuscripts should include all figures and tables numbered consecutively. Submissions need to conform to The Chicago Manual of Style. (www.chicagomanualofstyle.org)
- Each author should send with their manuscript an abstract of 150 words or less together with a submission form providing their biographical data along with a maximum of six keywords.
- All manuscripts submitted for consideration need to be accompanied by a completed and signed Manuscript Submission form that is either faxed or mailed to the below contact address.
- It is a condition of publication that the Journal assigns copyright or licenses the publication rights in their articles, including abstracts, to the authors.
- Authors should strive for maximum clarity of expression. This point cannot be overstated. Additionally, authors need to bear in mind that the purpose of

publication is the disclosure and discussion of artistic knowledge and innovations that expands the realm of human creativity and experience.

Review Process

1. JUCR promotes and encourages the exchange of knowledge in the field of fine and applied arts among scholars worldwide. Contributions may be research articles, reports of empirical studies, reviews of films, concerts, dances, and art exhibitions. Academic papers and book reviews are also acceptable. Articles are only considered for publication in JUCR with the mutual understanding that they have not been published elsewhere and are not currently under consideration by any other journal(s). All articles are assessed and peer reviewed by specialists in their relevant fields. Furthermore to be accepted for publication, they must also receive the approval of the editorial board.

2. To further encourage and be supportive of the large diverse pool of authors whose English is their second language, JUCR employs a 3-stage review process. The first is a double-blind review comprise of 2-3 reviewers experienced with non-native English writers. This is then followed by a non-blind review. Thirdly, a participative peer review will, if needed, be conducted to support the selection process.

3. All articles published in the journal will have been fully peer-reviewed by two, and in some cases, three reviewers. Submissions that are out of the scope of the journal or are of an unacceptably low standard of presentation will not be reviewed. Submitted articles will generally be reviewed by two experts with the aim of reaching an initial decision within a two-month time frame.

4. The reviewers are identified by their solid record of publication as recommended by members of the editorial board. This is to assure the contributors of fair treatment. Nominations of potential reviewers will also be considered. Reviewers determine the quality, coherence, and relevancy of the submissions for the Editorial Board who makes a decision based on its merits. High relevancy submissions may be given greater prominence in the journal. The submissions will be categorized as follows:

- Accepted for publication as is
- Accepted for publication with minor changes, no additional reviews necessary
- Potentially acceptable for publication after substantial revision and additional reviews
- Rejected. A notice of acceptance will be sent to submitting authors in a timely manner.

5. In cases where there is disagreement between the authors and reviewers, advice will be sought from the Editorial Board. It is the policy of the JUCR to allow a maximum of three revisions of any one manuscript. In all cases, the ultimate decision lies with the Editor-in-Chief after a full board consultation.

6. JUCR's referee policy treats the contents of articles under review as privileged information and will not be disclosed to others before publication. It is expected that no one with access to articles under review will make any inappropriate use of its contents.

7. The comments of the anonymous reviewers will be forwarded to authors upon request and automatically for articles needing revision so that it can serve as a guide. Note that revisions must be completed and resubmitted within the time frame specified. Late revised works may be rejected.

8. Material, which has been previously copyrighted, published, or accepted for publication elsewhere will not be considered for publication in JUCR.

9. The review process shall ensure that all authors have an equal opportunity for publication. The acceptance and scheduling of submissions for publication in the journal shall not be impeded by additional criteria or amendments to the procedures beyond those listed above.

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Sharing Art Across the Continents - Art, Dialogue and Development in the Time of HM King Chulalongkorn

- The Siamese Composer Eugène Cinda Grassi
Bangkok 1881 - Paris 1941
Philippe de Lustrac (France)

The Siamese Composer Eugène Cinda Grassi Bangkok 1881- Paris 1941

Philippe de Lustrac⁺ (France)

For Anne

As it is well known, the reign of King Chulalongkorn was the era of the opening of Siam (Thailand) to the West – i.e. a time of transfer of a large array of values and concepts from Europe into Siam, in the various concrete fields of political, economical, cultural or intellectual matters. Most surprisingly it was also the time where a transfer in the opposite direction happened, revealed here for the first time, when values of a completely different order, belonging to the less palpable realm of art, myth, and imagination flew from Siam to give shape to an essential aspect of the most important artistic enterprise of the 20th century, the Ballets Russes of Serge Diaghilev. Moreover, the major and involuntary instrument or agent of this strange operation was in Paris known as the “Siamese composer” Eugène Grassi (1881-1941), the son of architect Joachim Grassi (1837-1904), who had been the first to introduce the European style of architecture to Siam.

⁺ Philippe de Lustrac, Freelance dance historian, France

1. Prologue: Joachim Grassi (1837-1904), the architect¹

Sometime around 1870 the young architect Joachim Grassi leaves Capodistria, his native town on the Adriatic, to seek his fortune in the Orient. Perhaps enticed by the commercial treaty recently signed between the faraway country and the Austro-Hungarian Empire (to which at this time Capodistria, now in Slovenia belongs) he goes directly to Siam, where two years before King Chulalongkorn has ascended to the throne and is following up the path of modernization initiated by his father King Mongkut.

Being the precursor of the architects, most of them Italians, who will come many years later to work in Siam, Joachim Grassi opens in Bangkok an architectural firm and is rapidly prosperous as he is the first to introduce the classical style of architecture in the kingdom², and therefore receives many commissions from the king and princes for both public and private buildings. Among Grassi's many achievements, the grandest is the imposing Royal Barracks built opposite the Royal Palace in 1882 for the newly re-organised army (known today the Ministry of Army).

At that time it was the largest building in Bangkok, while his strangest is undoubtedly the temple built in 1877 at Bang-Pa-In for King Chulalongkorn, who wanted something unusual. The Wat Nivet Dhamma Prawat is a temple in gothic style with a church tower, stained glass windows, and a gothic altar with the image of the Buddha flanked by two knights in armour! Noteworthy is also the neo-palladian edifice of the Customs House, which is nowadays quite derelict, built in 1888 on the Chao Praya River, next to the French embassy and the Oriental Hotel.

Grassi is joined in Bangkok by two brothers: Giacomo, an engineer who arrives in 1881 and will die of malaria in 1890 while prospecting for gold mines in Siam's peninsula (he is buried in the Christian cemetery on Silom Road), and Antonio, a sculptor, who lived in Siam from 1877 until 1885. Together they comprise the *Grassi Brothers & Co.* Joachim Grassi, an astute businessman, also runs the *Siam River Steamboat Company* operating on the Menam, and with Prince Sai Sanit-wong and Phra Nana Pithpasi he establishes the *Siam Lands, Canal and Irrigation Company* for the development of the Chao Phraya basin. But this is the time of French colonial expansion in Indochina and it is obvious that Siam will not escape for long, the fate that has befallen on its neighbours of Cochinchina, Tonkin, Annam, Cambodia, and Laos. Therefore foreseeing imminent and fruitful business opportunities Joachim Grassi in 1883, who was an Austro-Hungarian subject, becomes a French *protégé*, probably on the advice of the energetic French Consul Jules Harmand who was actively promoting France's role in Siam among the foreigners residing in Bangkok. Unfortunately this clever initiative brings an unexpected result when relations between France and Siam deteriorated ten years later, compelling Grassi to abruptly leave Siam in 1893 during the Paknam incident. He then returns to his

¹ I am very grateful to Pr. Lucio Nalesini, for communicating his very interesting study on the professional career of the architect Gioachino (Joachim) Grassi: "Grassi Brothers & Co: L'architetto capodistriano gioachino grassi e fratelli nella Bangkok di fine secolo XIX", in *AnnaleS (Anali za istrske in mediteranske Studije/Annali di Studi istriani e mediterraneei/Annals for Istran and Mediterranean Studies*, 20/2000), series *historia and sociologia*, 10, 2000,1 ; Koper, 2000.

² The Chakri Maha Prasat, the Throne Hall in the Royal Palace, build in 1876 in the Royal Palace by the British architect from Singapore John Clunish is still a blending of Thai and Western styles, with its three golden *prasat*.

native Capodistria where he re-establishes his Austro-hungarian nationality. Then in 1897, having married (at almost sixty) the sister of an associate, Amalia Stölker, the architect eventually settles in Trieste where he resided until his death on August 19, 1904.

2. Eugène C. Grassi (1881-1941)

Although the public and professional side of the long existence of this architect in Siam is well documented, there is absolutely no information of his personal, private, or familial order regarding his twenty-three years in Bangkok. Although it was hardly likely that these were spent in solitude or celibacy. This lacuna would be filled rather unexpectedly thanks to a chance discovery made in the course of unrelated research, *a priori* not related in any possible way either to Siam nor to an architect who had been working in Siam, but the history of the Ballets Russes in Paris at the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed it is while studying this subject that one day there appeared a curious document that, after arduous research, would not only allow one to complete the gaps in the biography of Joachim Grassi in Siam, but also lead to a surprising number of conclusions on the more general topic of the relations between Siam and Europe during this time – and yes, with the Ballets Russes.

This document was the advertisement, in a Parisian review of 1913, for a set of musical scores, *Cinq mélodies siamoises* (Five Siamese Melodies), and was quite arresting since, although the name of the composer, “E. Grassi”, was not known to us, the author of the text of the melodies, M. D. Calvocoressi, was no other than the specialist of Russian music who from 1907 to 1910 had served as a secretary for Serge Diaghilev in Paris. While on the other hand, the titles of some melodies: *Death of Phra-Narai*, *Prayer of Nang-Sisuda*, *Song of Nang-Sisuda*, denoted a familiarity with Siam. This was most intriguing, since it was hardly common in Parisian musical circles of that time!

Musical encyclopaedias provide a few details about E. Grassi: “A French composer, born in Bangkok in 1881, who played an important role in the history of French musical exoticism in the first half of the twentieth century”³; “Eugene Cinda Grassi, Bangkok, 5.7.1887 - Paris, 8.6.1941, French composer who studied with Vincent d’Indy and L. Bourgault Ducoudray (1905-1910); he returned to Siam in 1910 to study popular music, the main source of his inspiration, and lived in Paris after 1913”⁴.

Eugène Grassi being born in Bangkok at a time when the architect Joachim Grassi had been living there for ten years or more, it was logical to infer a link between them, yet impossible to establish, however, due to a complete lack of any tangible evidence. Eventually the missing evidence was found in the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, where copies of all *état-civil* pieces issued by

³ Jean Mongrédien, *Dictionnaire biographique français contemporain*, Paris, 1985.

⁴ Marc Honnegger, *Dictionnaire de la musique*, Paris, Bordas, 1970.

French authorities abroad are kept. The *duplicata* of the “Declaration made on March 29, 1889, at the French consulate in Bangkok, by M. Grassi (Joachim), architect and civil engineering contractor, *protégé français*, residing in Bangkok,” and who declares indeed not one, but three sons! Félix Auguste, born in 1880, Eugène César, born in 1881, and Georges Raphael, born in 1884⁵, all declared as his natural children, with no mention whatsoever about their mother. There is no other trace about the identity of his mother than her being mentioned – quite ultimate in the official recording of the death of the composer on June 8, 1941, during the war in a Parisian hospital: “Eugène GRASSI, born at... (Indo-China), on... (sixty years old), son of Joachim GRASSI and of Lucie Nho with no other information known to the informant (matrimonial state of the defunct unknown to the informant)”.

“Lucie Nho”: an Asian name, though not sounding properly Siamese, and a Christian first name. We might suppose that Eugène’s mother was one of the many Siamese subjects of foreign ethnic origin. A Chinese?, an Indochinese?, such as those Catholics who in nineteenth century had fled the persecutions in Annam to settle in Siam, but nothing in E. Grassi background portrays any cultural Vietnamese legacy. A Cambodian?, since the provinces of Batambang and Siam Reap were Siamese at the time. Later Eugène will indeed teach Cambodian as well as Siamese in Paris. A Laotian?, the question remains.

“Through heredity and through culture, he had received the gifts of several skies and of several ages”⁶, a friend of Eugène Grassi wrote later. Assuredly Grassi’s situation was from the start markedly complex, since this young Franco-Siamese boy, born in Siam and half European, was in fact neither really French nor really Siamese. Nevertheless however ambiguous was his personal status, which must have been psychologically quite disturbing at times, the sure and essential fact is that the young Grassi, born in Bangkok, received there a thoroughly Siamese education. It is this legacy that would deeply and indelibly shape the sensibility, the cultural, mental and affective values of the boy. Because the three boys did not leave Siam with their father Joachim when he was compelled to leave in 1893, but remained in Bangkok with their mother where they received an excellent level of education. Eugène planned to become a physician while his brother will get his engineering diploma at the prestigious École Centrale in Paris. He most certainly attended the Assumption College in Bangkok, whose construction had been entrusted in 1887 by the Father Superior Emile Colombet to their father Joachim Grassi. Later Eugène Grassi states in an article about Siam, that there is in Bangkok a private college, run by French missionaries as certainly the most considerable and the most prosperous place of education in the kingdom, and in the same article Grassi mentions a former college classmate who has become an attaché of King Chulalongkorn⁷.

⁵ Archives du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Paris, Microfilm, *Duplicata des Actes de l’Etat Civil, 1889, envoyés le 2 janvier 1890 par E. Lorgeou du Consulat Général de France à Bangkok.*

⁶ Maurice Boucher, E. C. Grassi, *Le Ménestrel*, August 17, 1928. Paris, Bordas, 1970.

⁷ Eugène Grassi, “Au pays de Chulalongkorn, le roi - la cour - le gouvernement”, *Le Correspondant*, Paris, July 1907.

In 1897 Eugène is sent in France to pursue his studies, in Rennes, Brittany, no doubt in a catholic college affiliated with the Congregation of the Frères de Saint Gabriel from which depends the Assumption college. He gets his baccalaureate in 1901, and the following year his certificate of studies in physics, chemistry and natural sciences at the Faculty of Sciences of Rennes, since at this time Eugène is considering a medical career. However in 1903 when he moves to Paris, his plans radically change when he decides to start musical studies. From 1905 until 1910 he studies musical composition at the Schola Cantorum, the progressive musical school founded in 1896 by Vincent d'Indy in the Latin Quarter. A teacher there is the composer Albert Roussel who will soon author several works of exotic character, while another student is no other than the eccentric Erik Satie who at forty has decided to resume his musical instruction! Grassi also attends the Conservatoire de Musique, where his teacher is L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray (1840-1910). Nowadays the rather unknown, Bourgault-Ducoudray's teaching was actually extremely influential over a whole generation of musicians. He stressed the need for a rejuvenation of musical expression and exhorted his pupils to consider the most diverse forms of musical modes and languages, such as popular, religious or exotic music. "No element of expression to be found in any tune, he declared, however ancient or remote in origin, should be banished from our musical idiom. All that may help to rejuvenate this idiom should be welcome. The question is not one of giving up any previous acquisition, but on the contrary of adding to them⁸." Putting in practice his precepts into his own compositions, Bourgault-Ducoudray wrote for instance a number of pieces inspired by Greek or Breton folklores, or a *Rhapsodie cambodgienne* after he saw plaster reproductions of Angkor Thom at the Universal Exhibition in Paris in 1878. However, as no kind of music from Cambodia had actually been played at the Exhibition, the musician Florent Schmitt would later remark that, although not lacking flavour nor pictoresqueness, the *Rhapsodie cambodgienne*, was as well as Cambodian "could as well be said to be Californian, Afgan, from Limousin or from Groënland without really insulting our ethnographic conceptions. This, for that matter, having no importance whatsoever"⁹. But this is precisely where Grassi's own compositions radically differ from that of his master and from all of those others "exotic" composers of his time.

In 1910 Grassi shows to Bourgault-Ducoudray his first musical compositions inspired by popular musical themes he remembered from his childhood in Siam, *Nuit tropicale* and *Five Siamese melodies*, and his teacher immediately advises him to return to Siam to study more thoroughly the native musical idiom. Consequently, in the company of his brother who is now an engineer, Eugène Grassi leaves for Siam in May 1910, where he remains three years, until April 1913. In Siam however Grassi "does not study the music scientifically as his teacher has suggested, as a musicologist or an archaeologist, but lets himself get impregnated by the soul of his native land, absorbing certain inflexions and processes of fundamental combinations. He listens to the little groups of indigenous musicians and their

⁸ L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray, quoted in M.D. Calvocoressi, *Musicians Gallery, Music and Ballet in Paris and London*, Londres, 1933, p. 137.

⁹ Florent Schmitt, "Concerts Lamoureux, February 20, 1921", *Courrier musical et théâtral*, 15 mars 1921.

traditional instruments, the small orchestras of the theatre”¹⁰. Perhaps he goes as far as peninsular Siam, where such traditions are very active with the little itinerant groups of the peculiar musical and theatrical forms of the *lakorn chatri*, or *manohra*.

Not composing anything during his stay in Siam and it is quite a while after his return to Paris that Grassi’s musical production slowly resumes¹¹. A trickling out of short pieces, most of them vocals, all inspired in subjects and in musical themes by Siam. This exotic material however is always handled according to the modern and sophisticated formalism acquired in Paris at the Schola and at the Conservatoire, as critics state: “a thoroughly European and modern technique, enriched with exotic rhythms and modes, is expertly put at the service of a thoroughly oriental sensitivity”¹²; “a sharp far-eastern note in line and colour confers its true personality” to “the sure and assured craftsmanship of pages exuding classicism in the general meaning of the word”, to the precise and fine writing of “a true musician who notes the line with the precision of a Ravel and treats the orchestra with the research of timbre of a Debussy”¹³. Another critic explains that though extremely concise, Grassi’s music seems at first glance of an irreducible complexity, its clarity, and its organization appearing only with the means of expression of a full orchestra. “even enriched with unusual or exotic instruments, singing or bubbling at every heights, piling up colours that do not mix but enhance one another by their richness and contrast... The colouring is not a superfluous ornament, but an inseparable part of the intention itself, following it, meticulously adjusting to it, dressing it with an almost obsessive care... Knowing how to give in a few pages the impression of a world of sounds, organised in its tiniest particles by a meticulous and lucid will, activating all colours and all timbres, giving an expressive force even to noises, evoking the soul of the East thanks to the lucid enchantments of Western science, while keeping a strict balance, an exact and simple measure”¹⁴.

An important concern of Grassi is his desire to transfer in his music the system of the “defective scales with movable tonic”¹⁵ of Siamese music, and which, in an article in 1922 and a short musical treatise in 1926 he extols as a way to solve the dilemma of tonality versus atonality by the use of mixed mode. “With tonality more or less attenuated, that can be either formed by harmonics of a single series (all issued from the same fundamental note) or of several series (issued from different fundamentals)”. He gives as an example of “mixed mode based on the augmented fourth G-C sharp, or the diminished fifth C sharp-G”, the *mélopée* he heard in Bangkok on the occasion of King Chulalongkon’s funeral, and which he used later in his melody *La Procession*. In his essay Grassi suggests that Western composers should turn towards the Far East, “where the most unexpected and

¹⁰ Maurice Boucher, “E. C. Grassi”, *Le Ménestrel*, August 17, 1928, p. 357.

¹¹ After re-orchestrating his *Cinq mélodies siamoises* (La Mort de Pra-Naraï, Prière de Nang Sisuda, Chanson de Nang Sisuda, L’Espigle, Le Lac maudit), Grassi composes *Trois Poèmes bouddhiques* (Les Oiseaux inspiré, La Procession, Le Réveil des Bouddhas), 1917-1919, *Mélopée thaïe*, 1923, les *Sanctuaires* (Mosquée, Eglise, Pagode) 1923-25, *Complainte Laotienne*, 1926, etc.

¹² Henri Prunières, *Revue Musicale* 1 mars 1924, p. 254; the remark is about *La Procession*.

¹³ G. Migot, *La Revue Musicale*, 1 mars 1921, about *Mélodies Siamoises*.

¹⁴ Maurice Boucher, “E. C. Grassi”, *Le Ménestrel*, August 17 & 24, 1928, p. 357-358 & p. 365-367.

¹⁵ “Gammes déficientes siamoises aux toniques mobiles”, Marcelle Soulage, “Notes about Eugène C. Grassi”, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale-musique. juillet 1960.

the most varied modes reign, where chromaticism is thriving and, even better, the quartertone. In all likeliness, the rejuvenation of Western Europe will therefore be obtained through the transfusion of Asiatic blood”¹⁶.

Besides this purely musical aspect, emotionally the work of Grassi is ultimately based on the memories of his Siamese past as two examples will further demonstrate. It is for this reason they are imbued with a deep sense of nostalgia. Sometimes its explicit as caused by the sad personal situation of the exiled composer. (*Voile qui fuit*, 1926; *Sukhanimitra*, 1926, of which Grassi explains that the title comes from the Sanskrit *sukha*, happiness, and *nimitra*, dream, and the three pieces are *Happiness seen in dream*, *The Vision vanishes*, *Awakening and return to reality*; or the draft of a lyric drama, *L’Apsara lointaine*, *Far-away Apsara*, 1924, etc.). Sometimes emerging from the deep layers of his Buddhist upbringing and imbued then with a subtle sense of resignation: *Nuit Tropicale*, his first piece and for a critic evokes “the voluptuous anguish and the thought of the beyond that, more than the heavy smell of the sleep of the forest, weigh upon the intoxicated soul”¹⁷, or *Chanson Nostalgique*, *Nostalgic Song*, 1922, “not about the vague and unexplained nostalgia that can devastate the Western soul that possess no more than her own past. But feeling of the hidden sources – beginning of the journey back to previous lives – capture of shadows that once were ours and of felicities that belonged to us when we were not ourselves”¹⁸.

In 1915 Grassi becomes a *répétiteur* of Siamese and Cambodian at the Ecole des Langues Orientales in Paris, recommended for the post by the titular professor of Siamese at the school, Edouard Lorgeou (1848-1925), who attested to Grassi’s competence in his “knowledge, aptitude of oral teaching, as well as of his perfect honorability”¹⁹: it is Lorgeou who years before was a translator at the French consulate in Bangkok, who had registered the official reconnaissance of the three sons of the architect Joachim Grassi in 1889!

Simultaneously to his post of *répétiteur* that he held until 1927, Eugène Grassi leads his career as composer and of director of the symphonic orchestra that he founded in 1924. Convinced “of the importance for the renewal of musical art through a better knowledge of far-eastern music”²⁰, twice a month the concerts Grassi gives at the theatre of the Gaité-Lyrique are pieces from classical and modern composers more or less inspired by exoticism, Debussy, Roussel, Ravel, Florent Schmitt, etc. and of course, Grassi. The originality of the formula is that dance

¹⁶ Eugène Grassi, “L’orient et la Musique de l’Avenir”, *Le Ménestrel*, 12 mai 1922, p. 213-214, 19 mai 1922, p. 225-226; Eugène Grassi, *D’une Musique nouvelle-Reconstruire*, Paris, Heugel, 1926.

¹⁷ Pierre de Lapommeraye, *Le Ménestrel*, samedi 5 mars 1921.

¹⁸ Joseph Baruzi, *Le Ménestrel*, 29 décembre 1922. It is also to his Siamese background that is indebted *La Fête de Zakmoukou*, Grassi’s stage music for *Judith*, 1922, a play by Henry Bernstein after the biblical episode. A critic praised the “motives of Assyrian and Jewish origin” of the music, but this was later given under the title *Fête khmère*, clearly revealing its true inspiration! (*Judith*, decors by Serguei Soudeïkine, costumes by Léon Bakst, mise en scène André Antoine, Mme Simone playing Judith; première at the Théâtre du Gymnase, October 13, 1922, and Concerts Padeloup, December, 23, 1922.) Similarly the opera (never played), *Amour et magie*, set in a legendary Persepolis with characters such as Képhren, Zéhar or Niloum, but the scenario, involving a malevolent dwarf, magical operations over the Three World, an heroine immolating herself on a pyre, quite reminiscent of Hindu and Buddhist notions. (*Amour et Magie*, text by Victor Emile-Michelet and Jacques Trèves (alias Louise Ducot), who are both heavily involved with esoterism and hermeticism, so it is possible that at this time Grassi was involved too.)

¹⁹ Lettre of the Administrator, archives of the Ecole des Langues Orientales, Paris, Dossier Grassi: “the designation of M. E. Grassi as a tutor of Siamese and Cambodian languages would represent a precious acquisition for the School.”

²⁰ Henri Prunières, *La Revue Musicale*, 1 mars 1924.

is associated with music, as it is in Siam or in Java. While the orchestra plays in the darkness, the music is interpreted plastically on a platform by ballerinas of the Opéra or by “exotic” dancers, Alice and Juliette Bourgat, Yvonne Daunt, Mado Minty, Vanah Yami, Nyota Inyoka, etc.²¹. The concerts are given until 1929. In 1933, together with the composers Paul Le Flem and Charles Koechlin, Grassi founds “La Musique survivante”, whose aim is to play “pieces of music which has survived and that may hope to survive”²². Then later in the thirties, Grassi’s career appears to fade.

3. Eugène Grassi and King Chulalongkorn

In 1907, when King Chulalongkorn visits Europe for the second time (stopping twice in Paris), Eugène Grassi solicits an audience with His Majesty, which he relates at the beginning of a long (almost ten pages) and very well documented article about Siam, in the review *Le Correspondant*:

The King of Siam will soon be in Paris where he plans to spend two or three weeks. When two months ago he already made here a short apparition, I had solicited from him the permission to present him my respects. [...] As I was waiting for the time of the audience, an attaché, my former classmate, was very agreeably keeping me company. At two o’clock I am introduced into the vast salon of the legation where His Majesty, standing and holding a cup of coffee, exclaims in English: “Ah ! Here you are! You sent me a request for an audience written in Siamese, and well written. Did you write it yourself? - Yes, Sire. - You speak Siamese, then? asks the King in the language of his country. - Sire, I answer in the same idiom, I can speak Siamese but not very well, I am afraid... - You can write it though, he insists. - Ten years have passed since I have left Siam, hence some difficulty of elocution, but this difficulty does not exists when I am writing, as I have the time to search for my words.” Satisfied to hear me speaking in a tongue that he is allowed to prefer to any others, the King is smiling, while savoring his coffee. He is kind enough to inquire about my family, to speak benevolently of my father who was fifteen years at his service. Then after ten minutes of conversation where he expresses his desire to visit Paris as a tourist and without being constrained by minute details of protocol, the King dismisses me. I can then hear him saying gaily to himself “He speaks Siamese! One speaks Siamese in Paris!”²³

4. Three “exotic cocktails” of E. C. Grassi

In a recent study of Parisian musical exoticism at the beginning of the twentieth century, Eugène Grassi is briefly mentioned after the ballerina Cléo de Mérode and her exhibitions of Cambodian Dances in 1900, and an obscure theoretician of exoticism: “...A few years later, the French composer Eugène Grassi leads adepts of cultural pluralism even further. [...] In this perspective he prepares all kinds of

²¹ Cf. for instance André Levinson, “Yvonne Daunt interprète Evocations de Roussel aux concerts orientalistes de M. Grassi”, *La danse d’aujourd’hui*, 1929.

²² *The Musical Times*, vol 74, n. 1082, April 1933, p. 366-69.

²³ Eugène Grassi, “Au pays de Chulalongkorn: le roi – la cour – le gouvernement”, *Le Correspondant*, July 1, 1907, Paris, pp. 491-503. Perhaps it is no coincidence that it is in the same review that M. D Calvocoressi publishes in April an article to introduce Diaghilev’s season of Russian music, M.D. Calvocoressi, “La Musique russe”, *Le Correspondant*, avril-juin 1907, p 462-488.

exotic cocktails that he calls *Réveil des Bouddhas*, *Mémoires siamoises*, *Nuit tropicale ou Fête Khmère*²⁴. With the three examples of *La Procession*, *Les Oiseaux inspirés* and *Pagode*, we will examine which ingredients exactly entered what the eminent musicologist considers as exotic cocktails.

a. *La Procession*

When King Chulalongkorn dies on October 23, 1910, Eugène Grassi is already back in Siam and he attends the two funerary ceremonies that followed: the first procession bringing the Great Golden Urn with the royal remains to the Dusit Maha Prasat, and then, after it has been exposed there for six months, the second procession, on March 16, 1911, that brings the Great Urn to the funeral pyre for the cremation. This is the last stage of the long funerary process – the ultimate of the complex rituals punctuating the whole life of the sovereign, according to the ideological system inherited through the Khmers from ancient Vedic and Hindu tradition: the apotheosis transforming the defunct king, incarnation of Vishnu during his life on earth, into a real divinity, sitting forever in the celestial abodes at the sides of Indra, the Sovereign of the gods²⁵. Grassi is among the crowd watching the slow progression of the Chariot of the Great Victory, pulled by 220 men and carrying the Great Golden Urn, to the sound of a special orchestra consisting of 4 Metal Drums, 160 Red Drums of the Victory, 20 Silver Drums of the Victory, 20 Gold Drums of the Victory, 2 Chiefs of the Flute, 2 Chiefs of the Drum of War, 20 Blowers of Foreign Bugles, 28 Blowers of Siamese Bugle, and 4 Conch Blowers²⁵. One can easily imagine the emotion of Grassi when he sees the impressive cortege passing the Royal Palace and the Royal Barracks, the imposing edifice in the classical order built close to the year he was born, by his father for the new army of King Chulalongkorn. In Paris, a few years later, during the war, Grassi writes the melody *La Procession*, one of the *Three Buddhist Poems*²⁶, inspired by the memory of that glorious day and reproducing the “intense poignancy²⁷” of the peculiar music he had heard then. As Grassi explains in a notice to his score: “During both processions, the music of the palace plays a traditional and ritual *mélopée* entrusted to a rather special oboe, whose song, deeply and poignantly expressive, is accompanied by an continuous roll of gongs and punctuated with tambourines and drums. We have reproduced here this *mélopée* as accurately as possible, with its characteristic accompaniment, completing the piece and introducing a vocal part.”²⁸

The vocal text of *La Procession* consists of lyrical stanzas in Siamese for a soprano; the author, whose name appears on the score, is “Naï Thim, Parien”. Could this

²⁴ Manfred Kelkel “Roussel et l’exotisme musical”, in *Roussel, Musique et esthétique*, (dir. M. Kelkel), Paris, Vrin, 1989, p. 73-74.

²⁵ Cf. Quaritch H.G Wales (formerly belonging to the Chancery of the Siamese Court, and with information given by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab et Prince Dhani Niwat), *Siamese State Ceremonies, their history and function*, London, 1931.

²⁶ *Trois poèmes bouddhiques*, “À mon interprète Madame Germaine Lubin, de l’Opéra”: *Les Oiseaux inspirés*, poésie de Marguerite Combes, première at the Concerts Alexanian, February 1919; *La Procession* (chant en siamois ou en français), Stances de Naï Thim, Parien, première Concerts Padeloup, February 1921, Paris Opéra, dir. Rhené-Baton, sang by Mme Malnory-Marseillac; *Le Réveil des Bouddhas*, texte de E.C. Grassi, Concerts Colonne, 22 February 1920, Théâtre du Châtelet, dir. Gabriel Pierné. (Germaine Lubin sang the alternative choice of the French translation).

²⁷ Louis Durey, *Le Courrier musical et théâtral*, 1 avril 1921.

²⁸ *Trois poèmes bouddhiques*, “À mon interprète Madame Germaine Lubin, de l’Opéra”: *Les Oiseaux inspirés*, poésie de Marguerite Combes, première at the Concerts Alexanian, February 1919; *La Procession* (chant en siamois ou en français), Stances de Naï Thim, Parien, première Concerts Padeloup, February 1921, Paris Opéra, dir. Rhené-Baton (Germaine Lubin sang the alternative choice of the French translation); *Le Réveil des Bouddhas*, texte de E.C. Grassi, Concerts Colonne, 22 February 1920, Théâtre du Châtelet, dir. Gabriel Pierné. (Germaine Lubin sang the alternative choice of the French translation).

Nai Thim be the same playwright once hired by Chao Phraya Mahin to adapt the *Dalang* of King Rama I and the *Sepha Khun Chang Khun Phaen*²⁹? But what is particularly remarkable is the term, “Parien”, added to the name of the author – an enigmatic word that actually refers to a specific trait of Siamese Buddhism. At the beginning of their monastic education the novices first study for three years the principles of Dhamma in their own language, Siamese. Then in a second stage of six years or more, the monks study the texts of the Theravada canon in the ancient sacred language from India, Pali. Then when they have completed this cursus, they receive the honorary title of *Parien* (from the Pali *pariñña*, “wisdom, knowledge”³⁰). Therefore “Nai Thim, Parien” approximately means “Mr. Thim, holder of a diploma-es-Pali”: the author of the stanzas of *La Procession* had the qualification of a learned Siamese monk. It is tempting to imagine that when he comes back to Siam in 1910, Grassi, then in his early thirties, would have carried out the monastic retreat that was customary for any Siamese young man to undertake and actually that it would be very surprising that the high-minded young man would not have undertaken it and that he may have met Nai Thim during this retreat.

La Procession, Stances de NAI THIM, Parien, Musique de E. C. Grassi.

Fang eui, fang trê ! mùa pao hê prakôt chôt chuang, sanan sôt ô t ùuan sathuàn suàng, cha pài yang wàng luang, monthien thong. Sayanaha wéla Suriya cha làb khao, pleng, ratsami phrao dutcha la klanlài chôn: preb duéi pra Paramintharapin pra chakon, su suang sathaphon. Tê pranam yang ruangsi. Athit tha at sadôngkhata khôngcha khunmi; Tê chom narùbodi rùchakhùn hai khôn hen? Fang eui, fang trê! mùa pao hê prakôt chôt chuang, sanan sôt ô t ùuan sathuàn suàng, cha pài yang wàng luang, monthien thong.

Carry the golden Urn to the palace of the illustrious ancestors! Heralds, proclaim to the Thai people the departure of a glorious prince! In the radiant sunset of a beautiful day, in the horizon the Sun bids us farewell by sending up in the sky his gentlest fires: thus, radiating with the pure brightness of a summer evening, He whom we are mourning is disappearing from our eyes. Sun, another dawn will bring again your warm rays; however he what human eyes will ever see him again? Carry the golden Urn to the palace of the illustrious ancestors! Heralds, proclaim to the Thai people the departure of a glorious prince!

b. Pagode (Les Sanctuaires)

A few years later Grassi composes a symphonic trilogy, *Les Sanctuaires*, 1923-25, and the three parts, *Mosquée*, *Eglise*, *Pagode* to evoke the spirit of three religions:

The first of the three visions, *Mosquée*, is the earthiest. It is the rejoicing of the people after the deprivations of Ramadan, the calls of the Muezzin and the ritual dances announcing a paradise where the body will get his share of happiness. To this motley tumult *Église* opposes sober gravity and meditative fervor; plain-chant modes develop

²⁹ Cf. Mattani Moj dara Rutnin, *Dance, Drama, and Theatre in Thailand*, 1993, (1996), p. 103. It is the ballet troupe of Chao Phraya Mahin (Mahintharasakdithamrong) that the Tsarévitch Nicolas saw in Bangkok in April 1891, and that performed in Berlin and Saint-Petersburg in 1900-1901.

³⁰ According to a personal communication from Phra Dhammanando, Bangkok: “Parien refers to the 9th grade course of Pali study that most Thai scholar monks undertake. The Parien syllabus was created by the 19th century Sangharaja Somdet Vajiranavarorasa. Sometimes the word is used as a title for those monks who have reached grade 3 or higher in the syllabus: “phra maha parien” or “pra maha” for short.

like a monumental architecture in which contre-chant introduce more flexible lines, like the prayer of the anxious soul searching appeasement in the beyond. The third poem of this trilogy is *Pagode*, sanctuary of Buddhism. After a brief introduction in twelve times where harmonies are searching and seeking themselves, alongside others hostile to them, coming with delay or ahead of those resembling them, begins a sad call sung by the English horn, voice of everlasting desire; with a firmer tone the oboe answers, affirmation of the will posing itself as master and twice repeating its warning: renunciation is necessary. However the fever burst that was already quivering in the depth of the orchestra carried forth Man, who will devote himself to action³¹.

The texts of *Pagode* consist of a melody in French written by Grassi for a soprano, and of verses in Pali, for two baritones, evoking never ending migrations, rebirth and the happiness of the chosen reaching to the beyond of life. It is taken from two sacred books of Theravada Buddhism, the *Dhammapada*, “Verses on the Law”, belonging to the Khuddaka Nikāya, an ancient collection of popular stanzas of high literary value, and the *Mahavagga*, a section of the Vinaya Pitaka, “Basket of Discipline,” telling of the hesitation of the Buddha about divulging his doctrine after the Illumination.

Pagode reveals the knowledge and the deep attachment of Grassi to the religion of his childhood, but also the psychological tensions and antagonisms at work in a character whose status was from the beginning so ambivalent. French and not French and Siamese and not Siamese, the resigned dialectic of the exiled into a world of so utterly different values and ways, but to which he nonetheless entirely belongs too: “But we care for the flimsy life even more for all its pains. Brief light of our eyes, rapturous light, thou shine for one day. Shine, but already comes the darkness of the night, its veils covering the azure of the sky. The night immense and sublime!”

Ôm! Ôm! Ôm! I have traveled along the whole cycle and I have found nothing but immense distress and immense grief. Ah! Who will vanquish this world of death! Ko imampathavim vijessati, Yamalokam vijessati? Long is the night for who is not asleep, long is the road for who is walking, long are the countless lives for who is suffering. Few are those who will cross the river and reach the other bank. Digha jagarato ratti, digham santassa yo ja nam: Digho balanam samsaro. Appaka te manussesu ye janai paragamino. In the expectancy of the joys that soothe our hearts to the fancy of our desires, we are fond of this life, distressing and soft. But we care for the flimsy life even more for all its pains. Brief light of our eyes, rapturous light, thou shine for one day. Shine, but already comes the darkness of the night, its veils covering the azure of the sky. The night immense and sublime! Konu annatramariyehi padam sambuddham arahati? Yam padam sammadannaya Parinibbanti anasava.

c. *Les Oiseaux inspirés*

Les Oiseaux inspirés (Inspired birds) is one of the *Trois Poèmes bouddhiques* (the others are *La Procession* and *Réveil des Bouddhas*, about the birth of Maya, the mother of Çakya-Mouni). The text is a poem in French by Marguerite Combes, after a

³¹ Maurice Boucher, *art. cit.*

Buddhist legend where at night an hermit sees birds flying in front of the disk of the full moon, actually an opening in the dome of the sky, through which the bird eventually disappears. This vision evokes the hermit to nirvana, and he dreams “of the happiness of entering free and alive into the depth opened by such a brightness, alike to the sublime nothingness where the Buddha sleeps.”

In fact no such legend exists in Buddhism, neither in canonical texts nor in popular tales, such as the *Jatakas*. It was invented by Grassi and his friend Marguerite Combes. However, far from a groundless and fanciful invention, it relies on a highly complex set of references to Siamese culture and Siamese history woven together by Grassi, referring also to the his personal situation concerning his native country. Paradoxically this invented story provides a far deeper insight into Siamese culture and beliefs, its real and imaginary worlds, than would have an authentic Buddhist legend being simply reproduced.

The works of Grassi contains many evocations of the nocturnal sky, always tinged with a deep mystical or nostalgic connotation. The resigned meditation of *Pagode* (1923) ends with the evocation of “the darkness of night. The night immense and sublime!”, and it is the proper theme of *Death of Phra Narai*, one of the *Mémoires Siamois* (1910): Phra Narai understands his fate when seeing a star falling in the night sky. “Narai” is the Thai name for Vishnu but also that of the King of Siam who first opened his country to the West and exchanged embassies with Louis XIV, the *Sun King*:

Pra Narai, while one evening he was dreaming, saw a beautiful star of fire falling. His star! Yes, it was his star that was falling! “It is over, he exclaimed, my life, like a dream, alas is growing dim and fades. My wandering mind, alone in the azure, will rejoin his fate, faraway, to live a new life”. Appeased, Pra Narai the Wise bows and smiles at the darkened sky where never any more the dazzling Star will shine.

Curiously, when Grassi in 1915 applies for the post of *repétiteur* of Siamese at the Ecole des Langues Orientales in Paris, one of the few items of personal information he gives in his *curriculum vitae*, which is hardly relevant to the matter, is that “for one year I have been a member of the Société Astronomique de France³².” As one knows, astrology plays a prevalent role in Siam, from the decisions of everyday life to the determination of the most solemn rituals of monarchical life and of religion. The Moon also plays also a non-negligible role in Buddhist creeds. It is during the night of the full moon (of May) that Siddharta Gautama in meditation under a tree in Bodhgaya, reached *nirvana* and became the Buddha; it is at the full moon (of July) that he delivered his first Sermon in Sarnath and sat in motion the Wheel of the Dhamma; it is at the full moon (of February or March) that twelve hundred disciples gathered in a forest where they were ordained by the Buddha, a miracle commemorated by the celebration of Magha Puja, when people carry candles in procession around temples.

But there is also another particular motive for Grassi’s emulating an interest in astronomy: the prestigious example of king Mongkut, the very religious sovereign who had spent most of his life in a monastery and who then opened his country

³² Eugène Grassi, manuscript letter, Archives of Ecole des Langues orientales, Paris, Dossier-Grassi.

to the West had also for all his life held a keen, devoted interest in the scientific study of astronomy. Moreover it was precisely this interest in astronomy that was to determine the King's fate. He got infected with malaria while leading a group of foreign observers and scientists to watch the solar eclipse he had predicted in peninsular Siam on August 18, 1868 and died soon after. Then indeed, it was almost at the same insalubrious spot that twenty years later, in 1890, Eugène Grassi's uncle Giacomo died of malaria while prospecting for gold in Bang Ta Pan.

Moreover, it is quite significant that Grassi should belong to the French Astronomical Society: founded in 1887 by the astronomer Camille Flammarion (1842-1925), who although a great scientist, has the peculiarity of blending the rigorous exigencies of science with the irrational conceptions of spiritualism. He considered this not a mere creed but a true science and was so preoccupied by the question of the afterlife and communication with the dead that in 1862 Flammarion was expelled from his official post at the Observatoire in Paris after the publication of *La Pluralité des mondes habités* (Plurality of Inhabited Worlds) This is a book where he "scientifically" examines the possibility for the souls of the dead to inhabit the planets of the solar system. (as a convincing argument he cites the ancient Hindu beliefs consigned in the Vedas, which "proclaim the doctrine of the plurality of the sojourns of the human soul in the stars, following their terrestrial incarnation. According to these conceptions, the soul goes to the realm to which its deeds belong³³.") It is therefore not difficult to understand the appeal of such conceptions for Grassi: how in his astronomical contemplation of the starry night, besides being a solace for the bleak realities and roughness of the difficult life, could be reconciled with the incompatibilities and other irreconcilables of his rational mind as a Westerner with the soft mysticism left in his soul by his upbringing in Siam. And of the antagonism of the simplicity of Theravada Buddhism with the harsh sophistication of Parisian life, and to escape the primeval ambiguity of his double Siamese and French heredity.³⁴

As for the theme: "Birds flying before the disk of the moon", was not to be found in figurative or literary representations in the West more than in Siam. It is fairly common in the representations of the Far East. For instance in many of the well known Japanese prints of Hiroshige, *Panorama of Eight Views of Kanazawa under the Full Moon*, *Full Moon at Takanawa*, *Full Moon at Sumida River*, with flock of birds flying in front of the moon. On the other hand, *birds* actually play a role in everyday devotion in Siam, as it does in every Buddhist country, with the popular custom of freeing birds from cages near the temples being a pious gesture allowing the acquisition of merits by practicing the cardinal Buddhist virtue of compassion for all creatures. However, it can also be seen metaphorically as the image of the soul

³³ Camille Flammarion, *La pluralité des mondes habités*, Paris, 1862, p. 17. In another book of vulgarisation of scientific notions, *Clairs de Lune* (Moon Lights, 1894), the savant is led to considerations about "the contemplation of eternal truths": "At this moment the voices of nature let themselves be heard to my thinking under a meaning that until then had remained concealed to me" – when hearing the murmur of the cricket at night, "the genuine perpetual song of that evening", and explain that "anterior by several million years to the first creatures who sang upon the earth, the cricket seems to be the first living thing who made itself heard. It is like an echo of vanished ages, a remote memory of the past. This primitive insect tells us the whole story of nature. It was successively the witness of every epoch of the progressive evolution of the world".

³⁴ Besides, the notion of the stars and the moon seen as opening in the dome of the firmament through which passes the light, is not at all an Indian astronomical conception, but was emitted in the sixth century BC by the Greek philosopher Anaximandre, and much reused by Flammarion.

liberated by the teaching of the Buddha, escaping the world of the illusions and the prison of *kharmā* to eventually reach the awakening, the *nirvana*.

Lastly, and extremely interesting is the fact that Grassi entrusted the writing of the poem *Les Oiseaux Inspirés* to his friend Marguerite Combes. Belonging to a distinguished lineage and family of savants, philosophers, biologists and botanist, Marguerite Combes is herself a scientist who studies animal socio-psychological behaviour, with careful experiences on the comportment of ants, especially the *Formica rufa* species. Her observations lead her well in imagining the tale *The Princess and the Ant* as a book for children³⁵. As for the publication of her scientific research, in 1920 for instance, in the *Bulletin de l'Institut général psychologique*, the description of her study “Experimental suppression of enmity between ants³⁶”, or in the *Journal de la psychologie normale et pathologique* she describes how a colony of *Formica rufa* organizes itself to put out a fire set on their nest, and how “often the first confronting the flame perish, victim of their devotion³⁷”. These experiences are mentioned by Maurice Maeterlinck in his famous *La Vie des Fourmis* (1930). Later, Marguerite Combes also publishes *Le Rêve et la personnalité* (Dream and Personality)³⁸. So it is not difficult to understand why Eugène Grassi had asked her to write the poem where a sage is brought to lofty considerations while observing animals and birds.

Les Oiseaux inspirés, poem by Marguerite Combes

When through the night still and sacred, alone shone the nacreous flame of the moon. A disciple of the holy founder Gautama was dreaming, eyes towards the sky to the master he loved. While gazing at this lofty light, He sees beautiful birds with their familiar wings skimming across the star; they were rising, the pure birds, out of the turbid night and the dark sleep. They were flying up gently, slowly, far from the earth. Their swarm was quivering like a mild mystery. And the hermit thought: “Those bird are blessed! For their wings lift them towards the light. Whereas I lay in the lugubrious and pitiful night”. However the birds, in one long ineffable group were passing and passing again, flying always higher. The hermit, ecstatic and trembling, soon sees them turning across the moon and getting lost in the shadow. Only to reappear yet higher all in their great number. Before the pale face where their flight was rushing Into the light! And discovering their secret. He was watching them escape through the odd window, which inspiration had revealed to them. Under the

³⁵ Marguerite Bonnier-Combes, *Six magiques histoires*, Illustrations par Hélène Costantin, Paris, Delachaux et Niestlé, collection Pâquerette (Charmante collection de volumes pour enfants, garçons et filles, de 7 à 12 ans), 1922.; première histoire : “La Princesse et la fourmi” ; Histoire du Roi-chasseur et de son beau-frère le rossignol, (conte), Paris, Berger Levrault, 1921: “Once upon a time there was a young princess who understood the language of ants, I do not know who had taught it to her...” Princess Rosefeuille and her best friend the Ant go on an expedition to liberate the imprisoned princess' little brothers, Livin and Florimar, and the ant's little sisters, Gomme-de-Résine and Parfum-de-l'Herbe”.

³⁶ Marguerite Combes, “Suppression expérimentale de l'inimitié entre Fourmis”, *Bulletin de l'Institut général psychologique*, XX, 4-6, 1920, p. 201-215. The experience is quoted by Henri Piéron, “Bibliographie”, *L'Année psychologique*, 1920, vol 22, N. 1, p. 291. Marguerite Combes “Choses vues chez les fourmis”, *Mercure de France*, 15 décembre 1935 p 527. She also collaborates with Colette and Edmond Jaloux, to *Le Mystère animal*, Paris, 1939. Later Marguerite Combes publishes in the *Journal de la psychologie normale et pathologique* an article describing how a colony of *Formica rufa* organises itself to put out a fire set on their nest, and how “often the first confronting the flame perish, victim of their devotion

³⁷ Also published in the magazine *La Nature*, n° 2778, 1 January 1928, Marguerite Combes, “Extinction méthodique du feu par une fourmilière de *Formica rufa*”.

³⁸ Marguerite Combes, *Le Rêve et la personnalité*, Paris, 1932. In the foreword by André Lalande, we are told told that Marguerite Combes “has contributed to the progress of zoological psychology with her observations at the same time new, patient and precise”.

balmy night perfumed by the wind then. He dreamt of the happiness of entering free and alive into the depth opened by such a brightness, alike to the sublime nothingness where the Buddha sleeps.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that music historians and musicians would consider that the *Three Japanese Lyrics* composed by Stravinsky in 1913 (never having heard Japanese music nor visited Japan), or the opéra-ballet *Padmavati* composed in 1914 by Albert Roussel (after a one month long honeymoon trip in India), should be greater musically than any music ever composed by Eugène Grassi, but could one contend that Grassi's exotic cocktails contained slightly more than a dose of authenticity?

5. E. C. Grassi and the Thai Dance of Prince Damrong

In 1925, prompted by a recent actuality at the Paris Opéra, Grassi writes a series of four articles about Siamese dance in a musical newspaper: *The class of rhythmic dance*, introduced a few years earlier at the Paris Opéra to enlarge dance vocabulary and technique. It is eventually dissolved by the director Jacques Rouché, who realizes that, lacking any serious technical basis, this teaching could not lead to any satisfactory result. Grassi wonders then in *Le Guide du concert* if the praiseworthy experience could not be resumed “on a new basis presenting better guarantees”: “Does not plastic interpretation in modern ballet require this new effort? And, for lack of documents that would restore the Greek choreography, in essence certainly rhythmic, couldn't we find in countries where danced pantomime is still practised, meticulously codified and perfected for a long time, some suggestions for the creation of a new plastic art?³⁹”

Moreover the country where such dance tradition and practice exists, with pantomime meticulously codified and perfected for a long time is Siam. Therefore Grassi explains some principles of Siamese dance in a series of article based on the book *Tamran fon ram* (Lessons of Thai dance), published in Bangkok in 1923 by Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, brother of King Chulalongkorn and historian of Siamese culture and arts⁴⁰. E. Grassi translates and comments on parts of the book, selecting a dozen photographs among the sixty reproductions of the basic postures of Siamese dance, carefully describing these attitudes and analysing their structure. See two examples further down. Evidently “the attitudes, immobilized in the pictures, barely allows one to guess the movements, which have brought them forth, and which constitute the essential part of dance”. His articles also contain extremely interesting remarks about issues never considered elsewhere. Explaining for instance, by which process sacred, ritual dance as practised in India, has evolved to become a very different form of dramatic and theatrical art in Cambodia and Siam, and again in Cambodia through Siam in the 19th century:

“Why choreographic art of Siam and Cambodia, of religious origin, has now become almost entirely secular? Buddhism, austere religion and philosophy rather than religion,

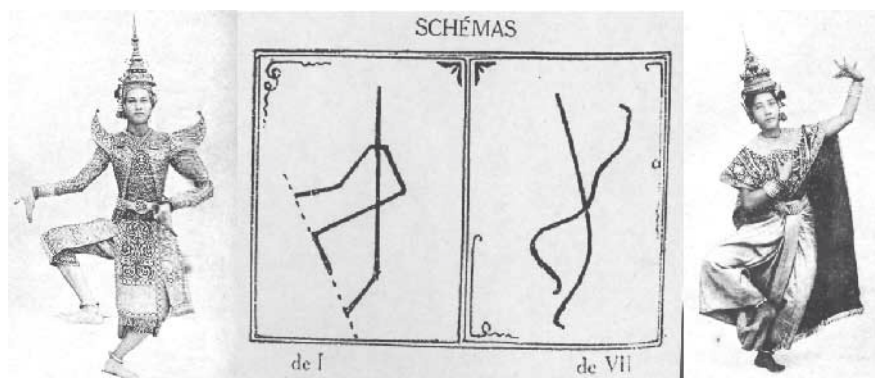
³⁹ E. C. Grassi, “La Danse Classique Siamoise”, *Le Guide du Concert*, 11 décembre 1925, pp. 263-4; 1 janvier 1926, pp. 327-9; 15 janvier 1926, p. 391-395. Grassi also publishes the article “Le Ramayana”, *Le Ménestrel*, 14 janvier 1927.

⁴⁰ H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rajanubhap, *Tamran fon ram* (The Lessons of Thai dance), published on the occasion of the cremation of H.R.H. Prince Chuthathutchadilok, Bangkok, 1923.

has no pompous rites through which to exteriorize symbols in the cults where still survive and dominate theocratic traditions... While retaining their sacred character, brahmanic dances, as soon as they were imported in Buddhist countries, were excluded from the religious ceremony itself. But an important place was reserved for them in the celebrations taking place around the temples, on the ground surrounding the pagodas. Thus freed from the strict requirement to meet only the needs of worship, they could gradually evolve. They were subjected to the influence of environment in their transformation. They were slowly perfected until they found, it seems, their definitive forms in which they crystallized.”

Two of the Twelve Postures Described in the Article by Grassi

The King spread his largesse from the top of his chariot. Figures of this kind are better realized by men than by women. Moreover his dress, high tiara, fins raising in point on the shoulders, leotards, etc., also contributes to the sharpness of lines that the curved shape and soft folds of the women’s dress cannot provide. By analyzing the attitude of the dancer, we notice first a long straight and vertical line, descending from the top of the tiara, crossing without deviation the whole bust and reaching the left knee, slightly bent, and so breaking the line preserves the figure of all stiffness. Another line, twice broken, rises obliquely from the right foot, once broken at the knee to form an acute angle, is inverted to go on rising obliquely, passing through the belt and the extended left forearm, again broken at the elbow in a similar angle as the first, eventually reaching the left shoulder by following a direction exactly parallel to the lower right leg. This long broken line, with the parallelism and the equivalence of the two angles, made very elegant by its obliquity, realizes a symmetry, reversed but perfect. Finally the right arm, that defines the meaning of the figure (here the gesture that provides gifts), that does not fail to complete the general outline of the design: the arms slightly bent as the leg and also forming an obtuse angle, realizes thus a new symmetry, the hand in exact extension of the straight line (in dotted line on the diagram) passing through the feet, lower part and knee of the right leg. This figure is a marvel of design and construction. The expression of greatness and nobility are due, we cannot repeat it too often, to the straight lines offset by ruptures, to the equal angles, to the parallels and symmetries. Moreover, these completely avoid the banality of bilateral symmetry: felt at once, they are understood only after analysis. And a global symmetry produced by the oblique intersection of two main lines, successfully stresses the symmetries of details. The movement can be guessed: it consists of a slow progression, each step interrupted by the attitude.



The block of wood on the chest, as is very romantically the figure of the photograph, or if you want “From this height you dropped a hard word on my heart.” Perhaps indeed a little precious and even mawkish, but so nice! The ballerina manages through subtle and indescribable nuances of interpretation to keep the just measure, making absolutely charming this figure. Besides, the costume of the woman, quite soft and with no angles, allows her to draw with her attitude the graceful curves that are imperative here. A first bent line, barely curved at first, comes down from the top of the crown, runs through the body, bends more strongly to the third quarter of its length, to reach, so deflected, the left foot. A second line starts at the right foot, meanders along the leg, passes obliquely through the waist, follows the rim of the mantle, reaches the left arm and continues its sinuous course through the arm lifted up to the left hand. The shapes of both lines and their respective positions create a delicate and elegant harmony, complemented by the right forearm and the right hand more specifically expressing the meaning of the gesture. Eventually, nothing being left to chance, the arrangement of the fingers brings to the design the ultimate detail, the finish that makes the masterpiece.

6. From Siam to the Ballets Russes

In the first decade of the 20th century there exists in Paris a group of musicians, more or less gravitating around Maurice Ravel, who has been greatly influenced by the teaching of L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray in particular regarding exoticism: The composers Florent Schmitt (1870-1958, authored in 1898 a symphonic poem, *Combat des Raksasas et délivrance de Sitâ*, adapted from the *Ramayana*⁴¹); Albert Roussel (1869-1937, a former naval officer who had travelled in the Far-East, composes *Evocations*, his impressions at Ellora, Jaïpur and Bénarès during his honeymoon journey to India in 1909, and soon after he begins *Padmavati*⁴²); Maurice Delage (1879-1961, who writes *Quatre poèmes hindous* and *Ragamalika*, 1912-1922, after a trip to India in 1912⁴³). One can easily guess that whatever their intrinsic musical merits, the exoticism of their compositions remained hypothetical and superficial⁴⁴.

To this group of musicians the critic Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi also belongs. He is a specialist in Russian music, in particular of Moussorgsky. He works as a secretary for Serge Diaghilev from 1906 until 1910 and was very much involved in

⁴¹ *Combat des Raksasas et délivrance de Sitâ*, of which the manuscript was destroyed during the 1910's flooding of Paris, is mentioned in the list of Florent Schmitt's works, given in *Revue Musicale*, 1 avril 1924, Maybe they were influenced too by the publication in 1890 by the great Indian specialist Sylvain Lévy of his thesis *Le Théâtre Indien*, very influential over European theatrical conceptions: for instance Lugué-Poe staged in 1895 the ancient Hindou play of Sudraka, *Le Chariot de terre cuite* (The Little Clay Cart), with decors by Toulouse-Lautrec and a prologue read by the anarchist Félix Fénéon, where Buddha appears as a kind a revolutionary hero.

⁴² The historic story he heard in Chitoragh, Rajasthan, was given a completely non-Hindu psychological turn in Roussel's libretto. Roussel complained that he heard barely any Indian music during his trip (barely more than one month long) in India.

⁴³ Based on music of India, interpreted on a prepared piano with pieces of cardboard under the strings to imitate the sound of an Indian drum.

⁴⁴ Cf. Allan Kozinn, “Music Review: Festival of Song, French Composer's' Variations on East meets West”, *The New York Times*, 14 février 1995: “Depending on one's point of view, the exoticism that flourished in early 20th century French music was either an egregious example of European cultural appropriation or multiculturalism long before it was in vogue.[...] The festival's directors presented several solutions to the problem of combining East and West. Maurice Delage struck a tenuous but fascinating balance in his *Poèmes Hindous* (1912). The accompaniments sometimes approximated the sounds of an Indian ensemble [...] but the vocal melodies were unmistakably Gallic. Eugene Cinda Grassi, by contrast, notated traditional Thai melodies in his *Poèmes Bouddhiques*.”

the preparation of the concerts of Russian music in 1907, and with Boris Godounov at the Opéra in 1908, and the two first seasons of the ballet in 1909-10. Partaking in the group's interest for exoticism, in 1909, Calvocoressi has the idea of a "Hindu ballet" for Diaghilev, *Urvasi*, a play of Kalidasa, for which Florent Schmitt should compose the music. The project denotes an unusual curiosity, since contrary to the famous *Sakuntala*, Kalidasa's other play is quite unknown. It is a story of the celestial nymph Urvasi exiled on earth where she introduces theatre. The project is eventually abandoned to be replaced by Jean Cocteau's inept "Hindu ballet", *Le Dieu bleu* (1912). Calvocoressi had also arranged some passages of a translation of Kalidasa's works into short prose poems, which he deemed suitable for musical settings and three of them are used by Albert Roussel in *Evocations*.

Never is the exotic Eugène Grassi mentioned in relation to this group of musicians. Then only once, when unexpectedly Calvocoressi tells in his *Memoirs* that five of his adaptations of Kalidasa "more or less remodelled for the purpose, had been used by Eugene Grassi, the Siamese composer, in his lovely Chansons Populaires Siamois⁴⁵". Grassi did indeed quite "remodel" the texts provided by Calvocoressi, since nowhere in Kalidasa appeared Phra-Narai, Nang Sisuda, nor the Lake Thalé Sab of *Le Lac maudit*, the last of the five songs of Grassi⁴⁶.

The *Five Siamese melodies* are given for the first time in a concert at the Salle Gaveau on January 16, 1911. Grassi is not present since he has already left Paris for Siam. Not any banal concert, but the first of a new organization of a group of progressive musicians, the *Société Musicale Indépendante*, headed by Ravel who has himself selected the program: The first audition of Debussy's *Rhapsody for clarinet and piano*, three pieces of Erik Satie (*Deuxième Sarabande*, *Prelude du Fils des Etoiles*, *Troisième Gymnopédie* played on piano by Ravel himself; it is the first time that the music of Satie is heard at a serious occasion. This concert being Satie's "real emergence from deep obscurity – an obscurity which had lasted twenty five years!"⁴⁷). Additional works by promising young artists, among them the *Siamese Melodies*: "three very interesting melodies where the *oriental* seems to me superior to the *scholastic* – I mean that the craftsmanship is less original than that of the themes and of the rhythms. The nice voice of the singer, Miss Sorga, a Javanese, stressed their exoticism with delightful inexperience and a most sympathetic stage-fright⁴⁸."

However, for the critic M. D. Calvocoressi and his Parisian friends, Eugène Grassi probably did not represent much more than a type of weird character and author of "lovely" exotic melodies. However, utterly different will his case appear to the eyes of the painter Léon Bakst, the main artisan of the productions of the Ballets Russes until the war, since he has seen in 1900-1901 the performances in Saint

⁴⁵ M. D. Calvocoressi, *Musicians Gallery: Music and Ballet in Paris and London*, Londres, 1933."

⁴⁶ The theme of *Le Lac Maudit*, a hermit living in a submarine palace in the Thalé Sab at Angkor, where celestial nymphs are singing, recalls the subject of the Russian operas *Sadko* and *Kiteje engloutie* of Rimsky-Korsakov.

⁴⁷ Carl van Vechten, «Erik Satie, Master of the Rigolo: A French Extremist in Modernist Music», *Vanity Fair*, March 1918.

⁴⁸ F. Gaiffe, "Les Concerts (la S.M.I; une symphonie de Mahler)", *Revue française de musique*, 29 janvier 1911, p. 482-83; cf. also M.D. Calvocoressi, "Aux concerts de la société indépendante", *Comœdia illustré*, February 15, 1911.

⁴⁹ Cf. Mattani Moj dara Rutin, *Dance, drama and theatre in Thailand. The process of development and modernization*, Chiang Mai, Silksworm Books, 1996, p. 102; Anake Nawigamune, *Nathakam Chao Sayam (Siamese Dramatists)*, Bangkok, 2003, p. 203-216; Nicoletta Misler, "Siamese Dancing and the Ballets Russes", in *The Art of enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets russes (1909-1929)*, San Francisco, Fine Arts Museums, 1988, p. 78-83; Anake Nawigamune, *Nathakam Chao Sayam (Siamese Dramatists)*, Bangkok, 2003, p. 203-216.

Petersburg of the Siamese troupe of Chao Mun Waiworanat (Boosra Mahin)⁴⁹. This was twenty ballerinas and ten musicians at a superb artistic level. Bakst is fascinated by Siam, and immediately after he painted *A Siamese Sacred Dance* (1902, Moscou, Galerie Tretiakov) representing the Lanterns Dance. Bakst is well aware of the link existing between King Chulalongkorn and his own sovereign, Nicolas II, and that the preferred son of the king, Prince Chakrapongse, had been the host of the emperor for seven years. He knows that in 1891, the young Nicolas had visited Siam and Bakst knows all the more about it as he married the widow of the young painter, Nicolas Gritsenko, who had accompanied the Tsarevitch during the entire long expedition to the Far East and in particular Siam!

Moreover with Eugène Grassi, Léon Bakst finds an occasion that he does not miss⁵⁰! An extraordinary opportunity to get invaluable and highly reliable information about the country that fascinates him – Siam. A “fairy-tale land, fairy-tale kingdom⁵¹” as it was defined by the chronicler of the trip. From some time around 1906 until Grassi’s departure for Siam in May 1910, for three years, Bakst can get from Grassi an almost unlimited amount of information about the mythology, the customs, the arts, the theatre, and the religion of the most fascinating and the most mysterious country of the Far-East. This serves to feed his taste for exoticism and he will transpose this with his powerful fantasies in most of the Ballets Russes’ productions of the period preceding the war. It is Siam and its magic – perfectly *real*, contrary to the phantasmal visions of Orientalism inspired by fantasized India, Persia, or Arabia – that confers to these ballets their bewitching appeal and their irresistible seduction, in almost every register, definitively not limited to that of exoticism, as we will see.

Two examples show the range of information provided by Grassi to Bakst. In several drawings for the *Firebird*, Bakst adds bizarre appendices on the shoulders: replica of the *inthanu*, the epaulette in the shape of a moon crescent that adorns the theatrical (and royal) costumes in Siam. In the other example, of a completely different order, during the preparation of *Shéhérazade*, Bakst comes one day with a strange suggestion: When the Shah discovers “his wives in the embrace of their Ethiopian lovers, he orders to have them sewn in bags and thrown into the sea”⁵². This bizarre idea, nowhere to be found in *The Thousand and one nights* is of course vehemently rejected by his collaborators, who wonder how it could have come to the mind of Bakst? – it came from Siam: “an amorous intrigue with the Queen, a royal concubine or a princess are crimes of *lèse-majesté*. The unfaithful queen or concubine is sewn with a large stone into a bag of leather, and then thrown alive in the middle of the river.”⁵³

⁵⁰ There are reasons to believe that Bakst and Grassi’s relationship extends from around 1907 until the death of Léon Bakst in Paris in 1924. In 1922 Grassi is asked to compose the music for the play *Judith*, for which Bakst designs the costumes. During the war, Grassi teaches English in the Lycée Carnot, exactly opposite Léon Bakst’s studio on Boulevard Malesherbes, and in June 1918, Grassi opens English class for “ten or fifteen Russian ladies, wishing to take a few lesson of English” (Grassi letter to the administrator de l’Ecole des Langues orientales), when many feminine members of Bakst’s family and friends have taken refuge in Paris from the Revolution in Russia.

⁵¹ Prince E. E. Ouchtomskij, *Extracts of the Voyage en orient de S.A.I. le Césarvitch en 1890-91*, translated and introduced by Walter E.J. Tips, after the German (1894) and French (1898) versions, White Lotus, Bangkok, 1999.

⁵² Michel Fokine, *Memoirs of a ballet master*, traduction par Vitale Fokine, édition par Anatole Chujoy, Boston, Toronto, Little Brown, 1961, p. 150-151.

⁵³ Monseigneur Jean-Baptiste Pallegoix, *Description du royaume Thai ou Siam*, Paris, au profit de la mission de Siam, 1854, 2 vol.

Furthermore it is what Eugène Grassi told to Bakst that has led to the most stunning of Ballets Russes' productions – or rather, one should say, the most extraordinary *fabrication* in the proper sense of forgery in that of *Firebird*. It is indeed the detailed accounts given by Grassi about the *Ramayana* (the story as well as its relation to monarchical ideology) and about the Garuda, the mount of Vishnu. Garuda is the invincible mythological bird also closely associated with monarchical power that will allow the transformation of the almost quasi non-existent and insignificant Bird of Fire, *zjar ptitsa*, of Russian lore, into the powerful creature who appeared for the first time ever on the stage of the Paris Opéra, on June 25, 1910 in the ballet *Firebird*. *Firebird* is an opportunistic and ideological creation conceived only to come to the assistance of the imperial two-headed eagle who was poorly battered after the disaster of the Russo-Japanese war and the Revolution of 1905.

It is because of this forgery that the existence of Grassi would be completely obliterated from Ballets Russes' history – as well as that of Siam. Because the same evening of *Firebird* a few minutes later at the Opéra, Vaslav Nijinsky interprets two solos in *Les Orientales*. In one of them, he is wearing a glittering costume closely designed by Bakst after the theatrical Siamese costume, and he performs adapted movements of Siamese dance. Some of them with a stunning accuracy, like the fundamental and difficult *djeep* gesture, for which no doubt Eugène Grassi had secured information completing what Bakst could remember of the performances of the Siamese troupe of Butr Mahin ten years earlier⁵⁴. Performed on the stage of the Mariinsky in February 1910, this solo was called *Siamese Dance*, quite logically in view of the good relations between Siam and Russia. Transported on the stage of the Opéra – where appears the *Firebird* – it becomes an anonymous *Oriental Dance*.

Photographs of the studio of Léon Bakst in Paris surprisingly reveal no less than four images of the Buddha: One Japanese bronze, one from Laos, a little Chinese statuette, and a large Siamese painting representing a *Jataka* (a very rare object in Europe at the time and never secured by the dealers of Oriental art. How did it find its way to the painter's studio?). In any case, the presence of all these images should perhaps be considered as something more than the simple mania of a collector of *orientalia*. It is in this perspective that two ballets should be understood with subjects a priori far removed from Siam, Siamese dance and Buddhism: *Spectre de la rose* in 1911, and *Thamar* in 1912.

Not only Nijinsky's hand movements as the *Spectre of the Rose* displayed an hypnotic grace that can be explained only by his acquaintance the year before with the subtlety of the hand movements of Siamese dance, transfiguring the banal gestures indicated by the choreographer Michel Fokine ("It is impossible to describe the fascination exerted by Nijinsky as the *Rose*", his sister Bronislava Nijinska later wrote, "I have never seen more beautiful gestures of hands and arms – the arms above the head that seem to open like petals."), but it is the very subject of the ballet, a girl in crinoline falling asleep after a ball and dreaming she

⁵⁴ It is wrong that Michel Fokine is credited for the choreography of Nijinsky's *Siamese Dance*: it is the work of Bakst and Nijinsky. If Fokine saw the Siamese dancers in 1900, he never says, and less is said leading to suppose he was interested – contrary to Bakst. It is the reconstruction solo that has inspired the *Khon* dancer Pichet Klunchun in his piece *Nijinsky-Siam* (1910).

dances with a flower or rather, with the *spirit* of a flower, that is submitted to an ineffable metamorphosis by Bakst. It is Bakst that invested the insipid romantic theme with a mysterious gravity, a compelling spell that made of it the most magical of the ballets ever interpreted by Nijinsky, and that led some spectators to speak of the “mystic image of the Rose”, of “disillusion of the young dreamer”, and of “the illusion of flying in the infinite” about the famous final jump of Nijinsky, disappearing in the night through a window – above which is hanging a *birdcage*, which Bakst was adamant that it was *indispensable* to the meaning of his ballet. The Spirit who disappears into *nirvana*, like in the melody of Grassi a few years later, a hermit “in the balmy night perfumed by the wind”, watches birds disappearing “into the depth opened by such a brightness, alike to the sublime nothingness where the Buddha sleeps.”

Additionally it is the opposite Buddhist concept of *kharma* that Bakst illustrates the following year with *Thamar* (1912). It portrays the perpetual orgy of perverted desire of the Queen Thamar, replicating itself endlessly in her castle in the Caucasus (Bakst’s libretto ends *exactly* how it begins, all will be repeated again and again), allegory of the inescapable and everlasting round of the self locked in the world of illusions. The *wheel of dhamma* is omnipresent in the décor, and also is almost unnoticeable at the end of a long zigzagging path, a tiny opening allowing the escape through *nirvana*.

Such were some notions, well beyond matters of decoration or mere exoticism that could be explained to Bakst by Eugène Cinda Grassi, the young Siamese who had changed the second name given by his father, “César”, for “Cinda”, the Siamese word for “imagination”. *Jindana*, from *jit*, the mind, hence *jiddrakon*, *jindakawi*, and *jindamani*, artist, poet, and precious stone respectively. However the most wondrous aspect of this extraordinary story, is that in all likelihood the young Siamese was never aware that the information he was providing were put to such use by the most secretive of all Ballets Russes’ artisans, Léon Bakst, and of the magical operations they allowed. Grassi had gone back to Siam in May 1910, one month before Siam would appear on the stage of the Opéra in the guise of *Firebird* and Nijinsky’s *Siamese Dance*. He remained away for three years, immersing himself in his native land, watching the little orchestras in the countryside and studying the sacred texts in the monastery. Curiously, on the year of his return, 1913, Bakst makes a bizarre new drawing for the *Firebird*, displaying the long metallic nails and the jerky characteristics of the *manohra* dance, the dance of the celestial bird Manohra.

In June 1941 during the Occupation⁵⁵ Eugène Grassi entertains the hope that his opéra *Amour et Magie* can be given at the Académie Nationale de Musique; the director of the Opéra, Jacques Rouché has promised to listen to an audition of the work and Grassi is actively searching for singers. Falling suddenly ill, he attends,

⁵⁵ Raymond Deiss, whose musical editions published most of Grassi’s scores and were the social seat of the Concerts Grassi, has entered the Resistance immediately after the beginning of the German Occupation. He publishes the first clandestine newspaper and is arrested in October 1941, he is decapitated (with an axe) a few months later. He is honoured as a hero of the Resistance.

deathly pale, a concert where two symphonic fragments of *Amour et Magie* are given. Hospitalized the day after, he dies three days later, on June 8, 1941. The concierge and the proprietor of his modest home hastened to sell his meagre belongings to liquidate some debts. His grave in a suburban cemetery, is paid for by Sacem, the society for rights of composers and writers⁵⁶. Curiously, the death of Grassi was mentioned in New York: “Leader of French Modern School, Who was Born in Siam, Dies – wireless to *The New York Times*, July 17. Vichy, France, July 16 – The death of Eugène Cinda Grassi, who although born in Siam, was considered a leading French composer of the modern school, was learned today from Paris. He died in penury in a small flat in the Boulevard Saint Germain. His age was 54. Mr. Grassi’s father was an architect to the royal court. The son was educated in Paris, where he remained the greater part of his life. At the age of 24, he composed “Siamese Mélodies,” which he submitted in manuscript form to various musicians. Their advice was that he return to Siam, and study the native rhythms. Mr. Grassi went home for three years and on his return re-scored his melodies, which the Pas de Loup Orchestra played for the first time in 1919 with great success. They remain the most popular of his works. Others are “Buddhic Poems,” incidental music for Henry Bernstein’s “Judith,” a trilogy titled “Sanctuaries” and an opera as yet unnamed and unplayed.⁵⁷

There is only one testimony about Eugène Grassi’s personal aspect and character from Maurice Boucher: “Almost ten years ago I was attracted by what the works of Grassi betrayed of ardent and strong thinking, as well by the originality of their technique. Perhaps eventually a personal sympathy close to friendship made me particularly receptive. However, I do not think I delude myself if I say that Grassi reveals himself more through his music than through his words. One senses him always haunted by a silent determination, assiduous to a task of which no one will know anything until it is completed, solitary with stubbornness, even with harshness.⁵⁸”

⁵⁶ Marcelle Soulage, notes on “Eugène C. Grassi”, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale-musique, juillet 1960, bn-musique.

⁵⁷ “Obituaries: Eugene C. Grassi, 54, Parisian composer”, *The New York Times*, July 17, 1941, p. 19. Grassi was actually 60: in the twenties he began to give as birthdate 1887 instead of 1881.

⁵⁸ Maurice Boucher, “E.C. Grassi”, *Le Ménestrel*, August 17, 1928.



Developing Creativity – Theoretical Discourses

- Shaping a Creative Milieu: Creativity, Process, Pedagogy, Leadership, and Place
Tom Borrup (USA)

Shaping a Creative Milieu:

*Creativity, Process, Pedagogy,
Leadership, and Place*

Tom Borrup⁺ (USA)

Abstract

This paper surveys research in relation to the conditions and processes considered important in fostering creativity in a variety of contexts including cities, organizations, and learning environments. Two established schools of the arts, and their leaders, serve as case studies in the examination of milieu designed to foster creative thinking and work. The paper identifies ten characteristics found to be common in the formation of creative milieu by scholars in psychology, business, economics, anthropology, geography, leadership, urban studies, education, and the arts. Characteristics include exchanges across cultures and domains of knowledge, opportunities for serendipitous interactions and for solitude, risk-taking, stable economic conditions, inclusive leadership, open communication, and the presence of visual stimulants and other creative people and activity.

Keywords: *Creativity, Creative Pedagogy, Leadership, Creative Milieu, Cross-cultural Interaction*

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Creativity has thrived and been nurtured in a variety of environments. This paper attempts to connect thinking about how creativity is fostered, and how creative environments or milieu are formed or enhanced. It surveys research from the fields of psychology, business, economics, geography, leadership, anthropology, urban studies, education, and the arts. The paper reviews creative process models, creative place characteristics, educational pedagogies designed to foster creativity, and leadership theories pertaining to creative organizations. Ingredients thought to foster creativity were found across this research, suggesting a roster of characteristics important to successful creative environments or places.

Since the 1950s, most research into creativity was conducted in the fields of psychology, business, and the sciences. Much of this focused on understanding creativity so as to enhance the creative output of individuals, work groups, and organizations. Cities as creative places have been increasingly popular for research since the 1990s, as have studies of creativity in education. This article will identify some of the common creative ingredients found to be at work in various contexts.

Two highly regarded arts educators, and the institutions they lead, serve as case studies in this paper to explore intentional creative environments. Subjects interviewed were: 1) Jay Coogan, President of the Minneapolis College of Art and Design (MCAD) since 2009, a 124-year-old degree-granting campus with 700 full-time students, and 2) Dr. David O'Fallon, CEO of the MacPhail Center for Music (MacPhail) since 2002, a 103-year-old school with 7,500 part-time students at its Minneapolis headquarters and dozens of sites across the state of Minnesota.

In the evolving world economy, technological change, global competition, and social and cultural diversity have driven business, as well as regional and national economies to seek new knowledge and greater creativity (Florida, 2002; Mumford, Connelly & Gaddis, 2003; Uhl-Bien, Marion & McKelvey, 2007). Being able to solve problems and to learn and adapt quickly is an increasingly critical capacity (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). Competitive advantages depend more than ever on a capacity for sustained innovation (Mumford, 2004).

Pink (2006) argued that the people who will accrue the most influence in the emerging knowledge age or creative economy will be those with well-developed right and left brain functions, in other words people with strong creative skills who can apply those skills in practical ways.

While creativity may be one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the human species, it is not commonly understood. Rather than attempt to define it, this paper looks at how it has been perceived, dissected, and fostered in the pursuit of enhancing creative abilities of individuals and groups.

Meanings of Creativity

The definition of creativity and the contexts in which it operates can be elusive (Mednick, 1962; Amabile, 1983; McCoy & Evans, 2002). Most scholars and theorists

consider creativity in its broadest terms as a human capacity exercised across fields, domains, or disciplines in all forms of art, science, and human activity (Ghiselin, 1952; Barron, 1969; Amabile 1983; Amabile, Conti, Coon, Lazenby, & Herron, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Root-Bernstein, 1999). Given its profound significance and broad applications, the term itself may be among the most used and abused (Negus & Pickering, 2000). As a basic yet complex human attribute, creativity has historically been a contested concept (Drake, 2003; Welz, 2003).

Amabile (1988) offered a brief definition in relation to its social function: “creativity is the production of novel and useful ideas by an individual or small groups of individuals working together” (p. 126). McCoy and Evans (2002) suggested: “creativity is the ability to fluently solve problems with original, innovative, novel, and appropriate solutions”. Updating the definition, Amabile et al. (1996) referred to creativity as “the production of novel and useful ideas in any domain”. They added that the related phenomenon of innovation represents the successful implementation of creative ideas. Welz (2003) described innovation from the field of anthropology as “the invention and implementation of new things, knowledges and practices” (p. 255).

O’Fallon (personal communication, April 23, 2010) suggested a different idea in which imagination was considered the basis of both creativity and innovation. He illustrated a triangular concept with imagination, creativity, and innovation as three distinct points. “Imagination is the capacity to create mental images that did not exist. Creativity represents the ways imagination is expressed or takes shape. Innovation is how you improve, refine, and apply what’s created in new ways”.

Coogan (2009) agreed, “stimulating the imagination strengthens creative inclinations” (p. 123). Gardner (1993) suggested the creative person is one “who regularly solves problems, fashions products or defines new questions in a domain in a way that is initially considered novel but that ultimately becomes accepted in a particular cultural setting” (p. 35).

Based on studies of highly creative individuals in a variety of fields, Csikszentmihalyi (1996) concluded that the most consistent and important quality of the creative person is that they enjoy the process of creation or discovery for its own sake. Using a similar approach of interviewing and studying highly creative individuals, Root-Bernstein (1999) isolated 13 mental tools or devices they found their subjects employed in the creative process. Some of these, including play, abstraction, pattern recognition, analogizing, imaging, and empathizing were common among the work of other scholars (Gardner, 1993; Bonnardel, 2000; Loi & Dillon, 2006; Pink, 2006).

In addition, some have suggested a continuum or value level of creativity. Amabile (1983) referred to the difference between garden-variety creativity and historically significant advances. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) described everyday creativity, as well as what he called big C creativity. He indicated that creativity is exercised or expressed routinely in daily life, while a more rare form appears occasionally

offering significant change within its respective domain. Lubart (2001) similarly described creativity in the category of eminent work compared to creativity in everyday activities.

Many scholars divided creativity into four elements: the person, the product, the process, and the environment or place (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; McCoy & Evans, 2002; Fleith, 2000; Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993). Prior to the 1980s, most research focused on personal traits. Until 2000, some considered the social/psychological environment, but excluded physical place and space (Hall, 2000; Drake, 2003; McCoy & Evans, 2002; Loi & Dillon, 2006; McCormack, 2006).

Historical Path of Thinking About Creativity

In a longer arc of human history, creativity has been a contested concept (Drake, 2003; Welz, 2003). In Western cultures, prior to the Renaissance, the notion that god, or the divine, served as the solitary source of creativity was dominant. For most of modern history, creativity was considered a trait exclusive to mystically or divinely inspired individuals or creative geniuses (Cagle, 1985; Negus & Pickering, 2000; Welz, 2003). Negus and Pickering (2000) traced this long process of creativity's secularization as it moved to the idea that creativity is resident in every individual and can be nurtured or taught.

According to Rentschler (2001) the traditional view within art museums had been that creativity existed within the objects collected – objects created by specially gifted individuals. Debate continues within Western art circles whether creativity belongs in the domain of special individuals or can come from individuals from every walk of life (Ivey, 2008). “A lot of people can only see imagination, creativity, and innovation as belonging to a small set of people” (D. O’Fallon, personal communication, April 23, 2010).

Since the mid 20th Century, scholars began to acknowledge creativity as a basic human characteristic. Child psychologist, Piaget considered it a fundamental trait, but one often suppressed between ages eight and twelve (cited in McMullen & Woo, 2001). Coogan (personal communication, April 12, 2010) agreed: “it’s innate in all humans. I think part of what we do is to resurrect it from where its been expunged along the way through K – 12 education and just through life and the pressures to be practical”.

Gardner (1993) considered creativity a universal capacity among the multiple intelligences, with some people having more highly developed abilities than others. “Although different individuals may be quite distinct in their potential for creative performance in a given domain, it does appear to be possible to increase creativity to some extent” (Amabile, 1983, p. 361).

In efforts to better understand creative capacities, early research focused on personal characteristics or traits (Barron, 1969; deBono, 1993; Root-Bernstein,

1999). Recent work, aided by new technologies focused on neurobiology and genetics (Heilman, Nadeau & Beversdorf, 2003; Pink, 2006; Shenk, 2010).

An often-cited watershed moment in creativity research came in 1949, when J. P. Guilford, then President of the American Psychological Association recognized it within the field of psychology. Leading up to and during WWII, Guilford examined skills that set some combat pilots apart for the US Army. His work on creativity and divergent thinking, (Guilford, 1950), opened a new era (Amabile, 1983; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Lubart 2001).

While it is generally agreed that in-born creative traits can be nurtured, general intelligence and education in its standard form do not alone foster creativity. Research found that individuals with low levels of conventional intelligence uniformly exhibited low levels of creativity. Those with high levels of intelligence possessed all levels of creativity (Amabile, 1983; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). Coogan (2009) agreed: “To achieve a good education, one needs to be creative; one does not become creative as the outcome of an education” (p. 124).

Creative Process in Individuals and Groups

Recent efforts to populate creative enterprises, institutions, and places with creative individuals and leaders have relied on understanding frameworks in which creativity takes place, and factors that influence it.

Mednick (1962) concluded that associative thinking – seeing connections and forming new combinations – served as the core. He looked for manipulable variables that produced creativity, and cited three ways associative thinking comes about: serendipity, similarity, and mediation. Associative thinking, or connecting unrelated matrices of thought to produce new insights or inventions, continued as a fundamental factor in understanding the creative process, but did not provide a recipe for nurturing it (Amabile, 1983).

Seeing analogies others do not was a key ingredient in what Bonnardel (2000) called the evocation process. Creative individuals or groups use data from external contexts to activate creative thought. This includes what he called inter-domain sources of knowledge or the blending of ideas from different disciplines, fields, places, and cultures.

A variety of theories have been advanced with regard to stages in the creative process. Wallas (1926) (as cited by Cagle, 1985) described four stages: 1) preparation, 2) incubation, 3) illumination, and 4) verification. These were echoed by Guilford (1950) and long considered the standard by researchers (Lubart, 2001). Cagle (1985) recognized that most theorists considered evaluation a step taking place throughout the creative process, yet he advocated a model with five stages: 1) identification, 2) revelation, 3) synthesis, 4) evaluation, and 5) verification. While the difference between illumination and revelation appear less significant, including both verification and evaluation reflected an acknowledgment that the external environment plays an important role.

Amabile (1988) postulated a different model geared for workplaces: 1) task presentation, 2) preparation, 3) idea generation, 4) validation, and 5) outcome assessment. Cagle (1985) looked outside the process steps to personal attributes of creative individuals. He described a number of mental attitudes or characteristics: 1) flexibility, 2) curiosity, 3) risk taking, 4) tolerance of ambiguity, 5) devotion of time, and 6) imagination. Coogan (2009) reflected similar thoughts: “Creative individuals display a range of characteristics. These include a willingness to tolerate ambiguity, to play with ideas, materials, and processes, and a desire to grapple with finding solutions to problems or ideas” (p. 123).

Wierzbicki and Nakamori (2005) proposed an intuitive, decision-making process in six steps: 1) recognition, 2) deliberation or analysis, 3) gestation, 4) enlightenment, 5) rationalization, and 5) implementation. They noted that gestation and enlightenment rely on preverbal processing and are less bothered by conscious or rational thought. They claimed that until the last decade of the 20th Century, prevailing theories refused to see creative acts as irrational, and asserted that creative abilities are largely irrational, intuitive, instinctive, and subconscious.

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) framed the creative process outside the individual as taking place between the domain, the field, and the individual. He referred to the domain as the discipline or area of activity. This might be medicine or geology, visual arts or music – or any of their subsets. As a pivotal factor, he asserted there is no way to know if an idea is new except with reference to accepted standards. Csikszentmihalyi argued that the field contains knowledge and sets standards within each domain. The academy, journal editors, curators, critics, professional associations, and the like, govern which new ideas become standards or are considered innovative in any domain. Finally, Csikszentmihalyi considered the individual, the researcher, artist, explorer, etc., as the catalytic agent devising new ideas or products within each domain and interacting with their respective field(s).

Most researchers have agreed that a creative individual is aided by relevant domain knowledge (Mednick, 1962; Amabile, 1983; Woodman et al., 1993), but Csikszentmihalyi argued that knowledge of and connections within a field are also significant to the process of discovery or invention.

Bringing diverse ideas and cultures together in a creative work team, an educational setting, or a city is frequently cited as key to creativity. The idea of cultural swirl (Hannerz, 1992; Welz, 2003), the mixing of and tensions between cultures (Weatherford, 1994; Hall, 2000; Wood & Landry, 2008), where analogizing and blending take place (Loi & Dillon, 2006) are the most productive environments for creativity. Welz (2003) calls for more occasions for serendipity and stresses the importance of openness. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) asserted that the best work bridged realms of ideas and that some of the most creative breakthroughs came when thinking in one domain was grafted into another.

Amabile (1988) set forth a rank order of environmental factors promoting creativity in the workplace: 1) freedom, 2) good project management, 3) sufficient

resources, 4) encouragement, 5) various other organizational characteristics, 6) recognition, 7) sufficient time, 8) challenge, and 9) pressure.

On the flip side Amabile (1988) acknowledged deterrents including restrictive environments, insufficient resources, insufficient information, discouraging team members, and unrealistic time pressures. Among the most significant deterrents were ill-considered and ill-delivered evaluations by supervisors or teachers and insufficient time for gestation of ideas (Lubart, 2001). O'Fallon (personal communication, April 23, 2010) cited discouraging statements such as: it's too big, it can't happen, it's too soon, or how are you going to get that done?

Lubart (2001) considered the capacity to see old problems from new angles essential, as well as a cluster of characteristics such as sensitivity to problems, capacity to provide many ideas, ability to change one's mental state, ability to reorganize thinking, ability to deal with complexity, and ability to evaluate. These, Lubart said, might be embodied by one individual or among members of a group.

Many scholars acknowledged that groups appear to go through the same stages as individuals, and that characteristics assigned to creative people can also be contained and function within a group (Amabile, 1988; Woodman et al., 1993).

O'Fallon, agreed and found more creativity coming from groups. "Individuals need the group. There are creative geniuses, but for the human community creativity is best supported and fostered – and most fulfilling – with others. But it's not an either/or" (D. O'Fallon, personal communication, April 23, 2010). Coogan stressed collaboration, team teaching, and interdisciplinary work to better prepare students to work with other people and benefit from new ideas coming from cross-domain thinking. (J. Coogan, personal communication, April 12, 2010).

Physical Place and Space

Based on his historical study of cities, Hall (2000) observed,

We find a vast literature on creativity, but relatively little that is relevant because virtually none of it addresses the question of location. Psychologists and psychoanalysts treat it almost exclusively in terms of the individual personality; so do students of management, who have looked at company innovation. Few studies mention the social context; even fewer are specific (p. 642).

Creative city researchers and theorists point to a variety of characteristics that stimulate creativity among individuals and groups. Many of these parallel conditions are cited by researchers in other fields. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1996), the characteristics of a spatial or geographic environment cannot be divorced from the creative person, process, product, or psychosocial conditions. They are always interacting in complex ways to motivate or facilitate creativity.

According to Welz (2003) the field of anthropology studied creative cultures but avoided analyzing factors involved in creativity for fear of enabling social engineering. “Anthropologists have long cautioned against the expectation that such innovative environments can be planned and purposefully built” (p. 263).

Considerable anecdotal writing exists on the significance of place in stimulating the muse, or its impact on highly creative individuals (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Lippard, 1997; Miller & Kenedi, 2003), yet physical environments in general, and those that affect garden variety or everyday creativity received little attention prior to 2000 (Hall, 2000; Drake, 2003; McCoy & Evans, 2002; Loi & Dillon, 2006). McCormack (2006) argued, “The design of environments from which creative behavior is expected to emerge is at least as important as the design of the agents who are expected to evolve this behavior” (p. 9).

Most major creative breakthroughs throughout history have come in places that were crossroads of cultures, provided a density of interactions, experienced social change, and where nonviolent conflicts between ethnic, economic, and social groups took place (Weatherford, 1994; Hannerz, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Hall, 2000; Welz, 2003; Wood & Landry, 2008). According to Hall (2000) no city has ever produced a creative milieu without a continued renewal of the creative bloodstream through immigration, trade, and tourism, as well as a certain level of social imbalance.

Creativity models, presented by Cagle (1985), Amabile (1988), Wierzbicki (1997), and Lubart (2001) showed links between creative persons, process, environments, and products, all of which included openness, communication, and group diversity as ingredients (Woodman et al., 1993).

French geographer Philippe Aydalot advanced a model of the creative milieu (cited by Hall, 2000) containing four key features: 1) information transmitted among people, 2) knowledge both stored and in memories, 3) competence in certain relevant activities (such as arts and industry clusters), and 4) creativity, described as a kind of synergy.

Examining environments from an economic viewpoint, Scott (2000) asserted that cities function as creative fields generating streams of both cultural and technological innovation and pondered why only some cities thrive. Asking the same question, Porter (1990) found that some possessed a culture of innovation or set of historically generated and socially embedded types of knowledge, values, and practices. Some cities built or attracted clusters of specialized industries, usually sprouting from natural resources, location, and local skills, all of which became one with local culture.

Hall (2000) outlined several prerequisites for a creative milieu which may serve either a geographic place or an institutional setting: 1) sound financial basis, 2) basic organizational knowledge and competence, 3) imbalance between experiences, needs, and actual opportunities, 4) diverse cultural mix, 5) good

internal and external possibilities for transportation and communication, and 6) structured uncertainty about the future – meaning open ended possibilities for change within an otherwise stable environment.

Drake (2003) looked at how the perceived attributes of a geographic place provided inspiration in the creative process. He sought to understand how the aesthetic inspiration of creative workers was affected by their personal or emotional responses to particular places. He saw four conditions that served as a stimuli: 1) locality as a resource of visual raw materials, 2) locality-based intense social and cultural networks, 3) locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition, and 4) locality-specific communities of creative workers.

Creative cities, businesses, and learning environments share many of the same attributes. One is that creative people seek centers of innovative activity. “It’s important for them to see and hear what other creative people are doing” (J. Coogan, personal communication, April 12, 2010).

Learning Creativity

Some classroom characteristics and pedagogical approaches were found by educators and students to enhance creativity. Successful creative spaces were those conducive to collaboration, places where ideas can be analyzed, synthesized, and applied (Loi & Dillon, 2006). These environments provided students with choices, accepted different ideas, boosted self-confidence, and focused on students’ strengths and interests. Other factors were found to inhibit creativity. These included when teachers ignored ideas, exercised controlling styles, and imposed excessive structure (Fleith, 2000).

Having completed design and construction of MacPhail’s 55,000 square-foot headquarters in 2008, O’Fallon (personal communication, April 23, 2010) felt that good design and great working spaces fostered creative learning and work. He asserted that people push themselves to excel when they form a psychological bond to a place that is highly regarded, describing MacPhail as a magnetic energy field where no individual controls what happens. “The chemistry is greater than any one of us”.

For Coogan, psychological or social environments supporting creativity were inter-connected with the physical. “Creative people need time to isolate in their private thoughts and time to interact and put their work out there” (J. Coogan, personal communication, April 12, 2010).

Not looking specifically at art schools, Fleith (2000) enumerated related conditions found to promote creativity in educational environments: 1) time for creative thinking, 2) rewarding creative ideas and products, 3) encouraging sensible risks, 4) allowing mistakes, 5) imagining other viewpoints, 6) exploring the environment, 7) questioning assumptions, 8) finding interests and problems, 9) generating multiple hypotheses, 10) focusing on broad ideas rather than specific facts, and 11) thinking about the thinking process.

Connecting creative learning environments to the emerging knowledge economy, Warner and Myers (2010) pointed to the importance of creativity-rich environments that provided cognitive stimulation that engaged both domain-relevant and creativity-relevant skills. However, they warned that these environments provided stimulation only to the degree that aesthetic training allowed learners to use the cues. Loi and Dillon (2006) found that collaborative learning environments enabled people to better experiment, contribute, change their thinking, and devise creative ideas or products.

Coogan (personal communication, April 12, 2010) believed creative learning is enhanced within a setting rich and diverse in people, ideas, and disciplines with active cross-pollination. His efforts to connect art students with a variety of external agencies, businesses, and community groups was designed to seed cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural, and inter-domain thinking considered critical to creativity and creative environments (Hall, 2000; Welz, 2003; Loi & Dillon, 2006; Wood & Landry, 2008).

“We need a new wave of holistic thinking; we’re moving from a world economy defined by physical labor to one with greater emphasis on mental labor” (Coogan, 2009, p. 129). Art and design schools, Coogan asserted, bring value to the larger society and the economy because they create environments that promote creative thinking and practical applications of creative ideas.

Like Hall (2000), who asserted that creativity in cities increased when there was a certain level of imbalance and uncertainty in the future, Loi and Dillon (2006) found that educational environments in stasis were not conducive to promoting creativity. To open up and create space for deep learning and to make rich connections, “the logic of educational systems should be reversed so that it is the system that conforms to the learner, rather than the learner to the system” (Green et al., 2005, p. 3). Coogan shared a similar pedagogy. “One means of increasing motivation is to give students more voice in shaping their education program” (Coogan, 2009, p. 127).

During the past several decades, the pedagogical approach in most art and design schools around the world were opened to outside influences to enhance the value of art education. Traditional guild systems and mentorship under a master, gave way to a broader curriculum and exposure to multiple voices (Talbot, 2002; Frankham, 2006; Coogan, 2009).

O’Fallon acknowledged failure as an important part of the creative process. “How do we support a culture where it’s ok to fail?” he asked. “No one expects you to perform badly, but we have a ways to go to create space for failure” (D. O’Fallon, personal communication, April 23, 2010).

Other researchers found creativity was enhanced through specially-designed, dedicated innovation labs (Gill & Oldfield, 2007) or creative learning spaces (Jankowska & Atlay, 2008) combined with activities or facilitated techniques. Facilitation encouraged collaborative ways of working and playfulness. It provided

participants a sense of breaking the rules where they shifted back and forth from formal to informal, wild to logical, and creative to conformist (Gill & Oldfield, 2007). Jankowska and Atlay (2008) examined ways to develop a habit of innovation among students. They found aesthetics, a unique atmosphere, flexibility of uses, and interactivity fostered by spatial design to be contributors. They also cited the importance of the ability of participants to work at their own pace.

Coogan (2009) advocated an atmosphere conducive to reflective practice with emphasis on crossing disciplines to create integration of ideas. He echoed Csikszentmihalyi (1996) and Wood and Landry (2008) asserting that “much of the creative work of the world has happened at the crossroads of cultures and fields of knowledge” (Coogan, 2009, p. 128). Art schools, Coogan found, have built silos rather than town squares, advocating they work towards a more collective and open way of working. He also recommended transferring principles from the open source software movement in collaborative knowledge generation (Coogan, 2009). This involves open participation by many contributors to a project, none of whom individually own or control the outcome.

Leadership for a Creative Milieu

A key ingredient in propelling creative environments is leadership. To generate and share new ideas and produce needed innovation, organizations of all kinds are increasingly concerned with the effective direction or management of creative work (Mumford et al., 2003).

Top-down hierarchical models fashioned during the industrial age are not well suited for a creative or knowledge-based economy (Mumford, 2003; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007), and despite these changing needs, most leadership theory remains grounded in industrial age frameworks (Gronn, 1999; Mumford, 2004; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007).

Leaders of creative teams or enterprises have been most successful when they possess substantial technical and professional expertise as well as creative thinking skills (Mumford & Licuanan, 2004). The best leaders for producing higher levels of creativity, in situations where they have day-to-day responsibility for creative people, were those who exhibited unconventional behavior as expressed through role modeling, creative mission articulation, and the establishment of a creative group identity (Jaussi & Dionne, 2003; Mumford & Licuanan 2004). Diversity of ideas, viewpoints, and cultures pushed leaders and individuals to adapt to differences resulting in more creative outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2007; Wood & Landry, 2008).

Both Coogan, and O’Fallon articulated how their own backgrounds as artists informed their leadership. Coogan, a sculptor, expressed excitement about shaping an educational environment that prepares people to go into the world and to be motivated. He described his experience understanding raw materials, conceptualizing form, and intersecting with others possessing skills to realize the work (J. Coogan, personal communication, April 12, 2010). O’Fallon referenced his work in community-based theater describing how it affected the way he practices collaboration, trust, and storytelling.

Upon his arrival at the art school, Coogan engaged in a planning process seeking the visions and goals of stakeholders. His results emphasized more permeable boundaries between the college and community, and working more “on the edges and on the in-between”. His subsequent educational agenda addressed inter-connecting the institution’s silos and hierarchy – while not eliminating them – and forging cross-disciplinary and inter-departmental collaborations (J. Coogan, personal communication, April 12, 2010).

Uhl-Bein et al., (2007) described such organizations as Complex Adaptive Systems, which they asserted increase organizational capacity, enhance ability to process data, solve problems, learn, and change creatively. In complex systems, ideas combine, diverge, become extinct, conflict with one another, adapt, and change with the primary outputs being adaptability, creativity, and learning.

Another quality considered appropriate in complex entities is concern for balance. Negotiation between obligations to, and interests of, internal and external stakeholders are key, as are commitments to social goals and broader moral norms (Hernandez, 2007). In situations of significant change or transformation, leadership may not bring answers or assured visions but need to act to clarify values (Heifetz, 1994). Such transformational leaders emphasize vision, values, and intellectual stimulation (Brown & Trevino, 2006).

Leadership that fosters creative behaviors enable an atmosphere that tolerates dissent and divergent perspectives on problems, one in which personnel are charged with resolving differences and finding solutions to problems (Uhl-Bien, et al., 2007, p. 311).

Two broad leadership concepts informed O’Fallon’s style: authenticity and stewardship. Authentic Leadership and the concept of courageous action in public for the common good as described by Terry (2005) were fundamental to O’Fallon’s philosophy (D. O’Fallon, personal communication, April 23, 2010).

Authentic leadership is typified by concern for others, integrity, ethical decision-making, awareness of the other and self-awareness. It is closely tied with the ideas of ethical leadership. Followers are more likely to pay attention to such leaders whose behavior demonstrates care and concern for others, listening, and treating others fairly (Brown & Trevino, 2006).

Stewardship includes clarity on values, inclusiveness, collaboration, common sense, and the need to separate leadership from position. Stewards inspire a sense of personal responsibility in their followers and the well being of the organization and society (Keith, 2008). These leaders do what they do for something larger than themselves, demonstrating responsibility to future generations (Hernandez, 2007).

One of the most important contributions to a creative environment is certainty – certainty in the stability of the organization, the availability of facilities and resources, and confidence in leadership (D. O’Fallon, personal communication,

April 23, 2010). A leader earns influence by adjusting to the expectations of their followers and by reducing uncertainty and providing followers a basis for action (Heifetz, 1994). Like Hall (2000), O'Fallon pointed to economic stability, as well as open-endedness about future possibilities as ingredients for a creative milieu.

Finding comfort with ambiguity, paradox, the unknown, and variables is also important in a creative environment (D. O'Fallon, personal communication, April 23, 2010). Learning to embrace paradox can be key to effective leadership in times of complexity. While most organizations are predicated on the idea that someone at the top is in control and has the answers, sometimes no one person is in control, and there are no answers (Hall, 2001).

Hall (2001) described several paradoxes that are important for leaders to embrace: to be both swift and mindful, to consider the individual and community, to be top down and grassroots, to manage details and the big picture, and to be flexible and steady. She pointed out that few individuals can bridge all leadership paradoxes, and that complex organizations and challenges require shared leadership.

Conditions found to affect leaders' ability to influence creativity included: 1) creativity of followers, 2) work group process including clarity of objectives, emphasis on quality, emphasis on participation and support for innovation, 3) control of rewards, 4) job characteristics such as complexity and challenge, and 5) organizational climate and structure (Mumford & Licuanan, 2004).

Some held that leaders are not part of the creative process – the generation and implementation of new ideas. Instead they play a supporting role, stimulating and facilitating the work of others. While leaders' technical skills were the biggest single predictor of group performance, the role of evaluator was the most common for leaders in a creative environment (Mumford et al., 2003).

However, idea evaluation did not always encourage creativity. While leaders' evaluation efforts generally had a distinctly practical bent, quality of feedback was critical. Success depended on how it was delivered and how followers reacted (Mumford et al., 2003).

Coogan cited servant leadership as the most influential concept in his approach. He also expressed an appreciation of adapting to situations as needed (Heifetz, 1994), and described serving as an inclusive convener to formulate direction and shape policies.

Keith (2008) listed ten roles of servant leaders: listening, empathizing, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community. Servant leaders focus on others not on themselves and make life better for others. "The servant leader is by far the best leader to take an organization through a period of change" (p. 27).

In a creative environment, if the vision of a leader is too strong or evident, it prevented people from forming their own unique ideas and pursuing their own vision of the work (Mumford & Licuanan, 2004). Based in interactional psychology, researchers found creativity decreased in the presence of autocratic leadership and by restricted information flow. At the same time creative performance increased with use of highly participative structures and cultures, and by use of organic organizational designs, and collaborative group structures (Woodman et al., 1993).

Conclusion

This paper surveyed thinking about creativity and ways it was fostered in a variety of contexts. Researchers and practitioners in psychology, business, economics, anthropology, geography, leadership, urban sociology, education, and the arts shared similar theories about processes and conditions that fostered creative activity, learning, and work. Some positive contributors to forming a creative milieu commonly cited included:

1. Density of interactions across cultures and between a variety of ideas with structured and serendipitous opportunities for contact
2. Stable environments with open-ended future possibilities
3. Opportunities for solitude as well as interaction where people determine their own pace
4. The presence of other creative people and activities generating new and divergent ideas
5. Inclusive leadership that clarifies values and presents challenges constructively
6. Paradox, risk-taking, failure, and ambiguity are embraced
7. Open communication and free exchange of ideas are prevalent
8. Visual and aural stimulants are present in the physical environment
9. Reflective thinking and practices are encouraged
10. Interconnected silos of domain knowledge and expertise are readily available

While no blueprint or recipe can ensure heightened creative output in any place, environment, or milieu, these ingredients referenced by scholars across disciplines provide opportunity for future research and practice. Drawing on research across multiple disciplines serves as one strategy to advance the understanding of how creativity is fostered and creative milieus are formed.

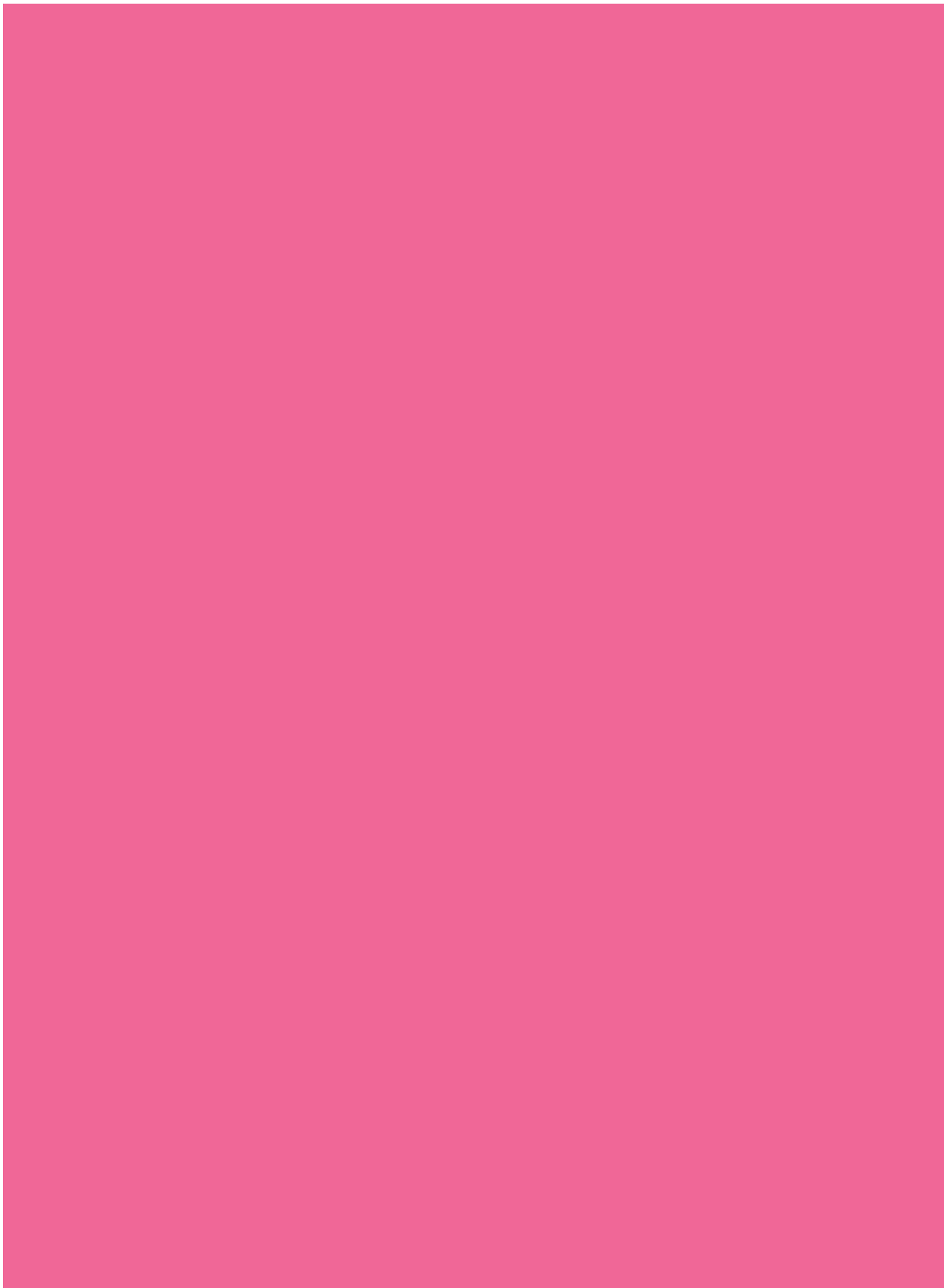
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The Art of Development – The Development of Art

- **Transposition - A Project for Cultural Change**
Geir Johnson (Norway)
- **The Progression of Art in Bangkok's Public Spaces**
Kamol Phaosavasdi (Thailand)
- **Destiny of Traditional Folk Arts in Conditions of
Recent Society - The Case of Vietnam**
Thanh To Ngoc (Vietnam)

Transposition:

A Project for Cultural Change

Geir Johnson⁺ (Norway)

Abstract

In this text I take the liberty to present Transposition, a large-scale cultural exchange program that was founded in 2006, with the aim of improving the links between the Vietnamese and Norwegian music scenes. Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the project is today the largest international music project supported by the Norwegian government, and employ or involve several hundred musician and students every year, through teaching, performance, creating or disseminating music in Vietnam and Norway.

Keywords: *Development, Cultural Exchange, Music, Transposition, Vietnam, Norway*

Introduction

This article will take you through some of the aspects of the project, who the partners are, why it was formed, what we are doing and where it might take us. Since 2005 I have been involved in a process to build relations between Vietnamese and Norwegian music institutions, called Transposition. The aim of the project has been to develop collaboration links and strategies between seven Norwegian and five Vietnamese music institutions, and it is now moving into its second three-year term of support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Norway. The original was created while I was in position as Managing and Executive Director of the Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival. This position enabled me to have dialogues with a large number of music institutions in many countries, and somewhere along the way the following idea slowly came to me: What if the idea of a festival was turned the other way round? A festival is like a cultural magnet, attracting the attention of a wide number of international partners, who meet in this joint focus for two weeks of performance. But what would happen if one used this focus to create a new basis for collaboration, by initiating links between our partners, institutions, which did not necessarily know each other from before? This said – we set out to try the experiment in turning the information the other way around – instead of receiving, we would use the festival as a source of production of knowledge for presentation elsewhere.

So for three years the offices of Ultima – in addition to presenting its annual festival – also became the node of an international network for collaboration in the so-called “Third world”.

Transposition – the concept is well known among musicians for “taking something and moving into another place” – as for example when you take a piece of music and transpose it to another key, – the name seems appropriate as the project aims to establish a cultural dialogue between Vietnam and Norway by planning and carrying out various initiatives that could perhaps be described by the concept “Reciprocity”, thereby constituting a broadly conceived collaboration over several years between the professional music lives of Vietnam and Norway. In the course of the first three years of continuous activity (2007-2009) we tried to establish the foundation for an intercultural dialogue characterized by something more than sporadic visits; our ambition has all the way been to establish a lasting link between the music lives of the two nations. Presently we are developing the second phase of the project.

In this manuscript I will focus on various aspects of this collaboration, and see how we have tried to change attitudes as well as develop new participation practices from both sides.

Why Vietnam and Norway? Like two parentheses that turn their backs to each other, the geographical positioning of Norway and Vietnam may be said to frame the enormous Eurasian continent from the northwest and from the southeast. One could easily create a lot of metaphors from this kind of position,

metaphors both with and without relevance to what we are going to describe in the following, but the essential matter is there; the cultural sense of equality and inequality at the same time, that has materialized during the first four years of this process with a committed collaboration between music institutions in two highly different societies. They share one common trait, though, the fact that both societies have been considered easy to control by their neighbors for hundreds of years, thereby not offering the peoples of these communities the rights to speak for themselves until relatively late. Norway freed us from being reigned by Danish and Swedish kings only in 1905, leaving only one hundred years to take the country from large poverty into a welfare state with a strong sovereignty and freedom of speech. Vietnam, as you all know, was continuously occupied and attacked until 1975, and has had a mere 35 years to build a sovereign society.

An essential aspect has been the immediate, simultaneous manifestation of similarities and dissimilarities that have presented themselves in the first stages of the process:

Two differently structured societies, two geographical peripheries with long coastlines, long histories of occupation and a strong urge for independence along with strong traditions of popular and folkloristic culture. This project is based first and foremost on the European classical music tradition, and aims to increase the standard and professionalism of Vietnamese music institutions through long-term exchange of expertise between institutions in the two countries.

We have chosen to call the project Transposition, a term that means “to place something in a new context, or to render it in a new language, style or medium”.

Thus, one may point to some obvious resemblances, which may even constitute some kind of identities, such as:

- Two geographical peripheries, both with long coastlines.
- Two different models of societies, both with a slow degree of industrialization and modernization until recently.
- Long histories of occupation or ruling by neighboring countries, but still retain a strong national identity for self-reliance and independence.
- Strong positioning of women’s rights in the societies.
- Strong folkloristic traditions that have survived many different reigns.

The differences, like the economic and political developments in the 20th century, completely different language groups, democracy vs. one-party state, relative freedom of speech compared to relatively strong state control of the opposition, all these elements constitute the differences and reduce the possibility of communication. When it comes to direct links, it is a fact that the Vietnamese community in Norway today is the second largest Asian community, only surpassed by the Pakistanis. The Vietnamese have merged relatively easily into the Norwegian structures, probably because most of them came as boat refugees from the south, and were basically members of the catholic society in South-Vietnam with a

strong link already to European culture. Probably it was the Catholicism which made them merge relatively easy with our culture, because their religious belief is the only aspect that makes them different from other immigrant groups. Partly as a consequence of this immigration, we have seen an incredible development in the interest of Vietnamese life in general, and especially the interest in the Vietnamese society as a potential market for Norwegian products in recent years, though it is also a result of the new industries in Norway which has shaped our society, the oil business and shipping, which is building links with the Vietnamese political and economic elite. The cause for this was that the Vietnamese government tried to find reliable partners for their “new politics” from 1986 – “DOI MOI” I think it was called, and they turned to Norway for some answers on how to run a development outside the control of the most brutal capitalist societies.

Traditional Culture and Contemporary Music

It may not seem self-evident to some that a festival for contemporary European music should be involved in developing pedagogical and practical solutions for the music scene in South-East Asia. To those of you who wonder why, here is a short explanation.

Since the early 1980's I have been interested in, and intrigued by, the possibilities of mixing cultural backgrounds, and what it constitutes regarding new impulses. Although my main background has been working on the European scene, be it as choral director, as artistic director of festivals, or as programmer for ensembles, I have always sought to find the odd impulse to renew the European tradition, to let the classical and contemporary music cultures of the Europeans meet with the classical and traditional non-European cultures. By trying to bring forward the unorthodox or the contradictory, the idea has been that the European cultures need to be challenged in our time, not only from the inside, but from outside.

If you go back thirty or forty years, the only concept of “traditional music” available in our society was Norwegian folk music, which was played on the radio every Sunday afternoon, but which didn't mean anything to many of the Y generation growing up in the suburbs of Oslo, as we were already predominantly electrified by the new sounds coming out from England via nightly transmissions over Radio Luxembourg. I probably learnt more from this radio station than from all the teachers at primary school, including the need to stay up late at night to get a feel of what was going on in the world.

The first major encounter with Asian music was through the assistance of The Beatles, who made Ravi Shankar famous among western youth. Their collaboration opened up a new way to listen to music and to other ideas that proved to be decisive for the rest of my life, and although I was not ready to embrace their relationship, it made the following case clear: that music could change dramatically even with the same musicians, given that the context changed. The life of the Beatles proved that to an astonishing degree.

The political uproar of the early 1970's paved the way for a multitude of music, particularly the music tradition of Latin American subcultures, such as Cuban and Chilean folk music, even opening up for a lot of other ethnic music from these regions, like Bolivian and Peruvian songs and instrumental sounds. Their music was not only new melodies, but provided also new soundscapes, even though the production facilities behind these recordings were simple, the world behind the music was present and fascinating.

During the 1970's the population of Norway started to change. The first group of Pakistani immigrants came to Oslo, and later spread around the country. I met several of these young men, about my own age when we worked together in the municipal transport system of Oslo, and some of them were very well educated already, but with no opportunities for work in their home country, which is why they chose to come all the way to Scandinavia. Looking back at these encounters now, I realize that it still would take me some time to get to know their music, and it was through other meetings with folk music through the professional work with festivals it gained a new meaning for me in 1981, when I was presenting a new festival in Bergen together with a friend, and for the opening we invited Ustad Fateh Ali Khan. Thanks to Professor Kjell Skjellstad, who was then my teacher at the University of Oslo, we had the opportunity to invite this already legendary artist with his ensemble on their first tour to Europe, beginning at our small festival in Bergen. It was an unforgettable experience. First and foremost, the meeting with such a wonderful performer and his fantastic ensemble was in itself a unique experience. It was really hard to believe that this generous person was the enormous idol of his own country that people had told me about. The concert in itself was wonderful, but the audience was also extraordinary: At least one hundred Pakistanis living in the Bergen area had managed to get away from work – the concert took place at 2PM in the afternoon, but also a group of music celebrities attended: Gil Evans – the partner of Miles Davis for about twenty years, was present, as was a group of Nordic jazz legends, including Jan Garbarek, Jon Balke, Niels Henning, Ørsted Pedersen, and of course Kjell Skjellstad. I believe this was the first encounter between Garbarek and Khan, which would later lead to so many fantastic records.

I know that the meeting between Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and the local Pakistanis went on for many hours afterwards, as they had taken care of him and his musicians in the best possible way, with food and a private concert somewhere in town. When the musicians went to Oslo later that week, the same situation happened there. For years, I was warmly greeted by Pakistanis in both Oslo and Bergen for having assisted in bringing Ali Khan to give concerts in Norway.

The years as Managing Director of the Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival gave me for the first time a real opportunity to make choices that would make a difference. When entering this position, I was convinced that one way of opening up the contemporary music scene to the general public, was by showing the common source of all kinds of music, from ritual, dance, religious ceremonies. By inviting the Beijing Opera on a Norwegian tour in 2003, by presenting the sufi dervish dance,

as well as by presenting the traditional program "Via Kaboul - Music from the Silk Road" – a presentation of 25 musicians from 12 countries in 2005, I wanted to make the audiences aware of how important the traditional and art music from the Asian parts of the world were to our own aesthetics.

My choices of traditional music met some critique from people who felt that a festival of contemporary music should aim at presenting only that – classical contemporary music from the Western world. To me, that seemed restrictive to the understanding of how music is developed, appreciated and disseminated in society. At least, how music develops historically, is also a question of what kind of impulses music can bring to other cultures. Anyway – it was after having done mixing of traditional and contemporary cultures for many years, that I started to consider the thought of how to take this idea further – by letting our own music scene interact on a more formal plane with another music scene, of which we knew little. The idea of working with Vietnam came almost naturally, as it was suggested to me. Knowing that the Vietnamese population in Norway is the second largest Asian-Norwegian subculture, it seemed like an interesting aspect to research. That there are certain inherent contradictions in this between those leaving Vietnam in the late 1970's, and those who stayed on, would only later be directly evident to me. So after some months of research and discussion, the project was launched in January 2007.

Short Introduction to the Project Itself

The core idea of Transposition is about change. Change in values, in qualities, in understanding your relation to the world in its broadest sense, by letting Asian and European musicians develop a mutual understanding of musicianship and humanity.

Transposition aims to establish a cultural dialogue between Vietnam and Norway by planning and carrying out various initiatives which may be described by the concept "Reciprocity", thereby constituting a broadly conceived collaboration over several years between the professional music lives of Vietnam and Norway. The core of the matter is repetition, as we have started to work with the Vietnamese musicians by asking them what are the main obstacles for the development of their music life and musicianship, and by responding to these needs. In the course of four years' continuous activity we have laid the foundation for an intercultural dialogue characterized by something more than sporadic visits; our ambition is to establish a lasting link between the music lives of the two nations.

The basic ideas behind Transposition are:

- To create a basis for interaction between Norwegian and Vietnamese musicians.
- To transfer expertise at various levels from Norwegian to Vietnamese music institutions.
- To help develop a dynamism within the Vietnamese institutions with regard to the maintenance and care of musical instruments, sheet music and performing rights, as well as knowledge of performance techniques and traditions.

- To introduce Vietnamese music life to Norway in various ways and in various forums.

The task is both complex and extensive, and we are constantly seeking to improve schemes for collaboration and direct contact, seeking to reduce bureaucracy. We have striven to give musicians, teachers and students in Hanoi and HCMC equal treatment. This is important for several reasons: The country's political centre lies in Hanoi, with the natural consequence that the inhabitants and institutions of HCMC to a certain extent feel set aside. This is supported by the fact that the orchestra in Hanoi has more resources and is more active than its counterpart in HCMC. The music scenes in these two cities are, therefore, very different. The music conservatory in HCMC is in fact larger than that in Hanoi, since it also caters for 1000 students in Hue - thus it seems fair to equate the music life of these two cities. But the fact that the government lays down more resources in Hanoi creates a situation of unbalance plus the fact that the embassies constitute a second market for the institutions in Hanoi, thus making a life as a professional musician more possible there. This project represent an attempt to cover the needs that representatives of Vietnam's music life outlined in their meetings with us at the first meetings in the autumn of 2005.

We established links between the following institutions:

- Ultima Oslo Contemporary Music Festival, established in 1990.
- MIC – The Norwegian Music Information Centre, established in 1979.
- Forsvarets Musikk, the State Defense Wind Ensembles, an organization consisting of five professional wind ensembles situated in different Norwegian cities.
- Norsk komponistforening, The Norwegian Association of Composers, organizing all 150 professional composers of classical and contemporary music.
- Baratt Due, The Barratt Due Music Institute, a pedagogical institution primarily focusing on the development of young talents.
- BIT20 Ensemble – an ensemble concerned with the performance of contemporary music, situated in Bergen's western part.
- Bodø Sinfonietta, an ensemble concerned with the performance of contemporary music, situated in Bodø, in the Northern part of the country: This is now part of the Arctic Symphony Orchestra, a new orchestra, which was formed last year.
- Trondheim Soloists, a leading chamber orchestra that travels around the world accompanying some of the leading soloists on the international market, such as Anne Sophie Mutter, but who also runs a talent school for young children in their home town.

In the first phase of Transposition, the Ultima festival acted as its initiator and governing body. For the second phase, this function has moved to the MIC - The Norwegian Music Information Centre that began as of 2010.

From Vietnam the following partners are active:

- VNSO, The Vietnam National Symphony Orchestra, Hanoi
- HBSO, The Ho Chi Minh Ballet, Symphony orchestra and Opera, Saigon
- VNAM, The Vietnam National Academy of Music, Hanoi
- HCMC-C, The Ho Chi Minh Conservatory of Music, Saigon
- VIM, The Vietnam Institute of Musicology, Hanoi

Originally, there were only two projects planned. One project was to be initiated in Hanoi, directed principally at the Vietnam National Symphony Orchestra, involving expertise promoting the development and professional development of the orchestra. Another project was to be initiated in HCMC, principally with the aim of strengthening the city's music education situation with the assistance of Norwegian and Norwegian-financed staff, resources and infrastructure. In addition to these main projects we aimed at initiating smaller-scale projects at the music conservatory in Hanoi and in the orchestra at HCMC. However, all these projects have developed into self-contained and complex structures, whereby each institutional partner has established links with various other partners, resulting from the discussions with the project management when unveiling reasons for cross-collaboration. Although the project originally intended to be an institution-to-institution project, the support is in many ways directed to individual users, and we encourage the individual responsibility of the project within the frame of the institutions.

Building Confidence Across Cultures

How does one go about establishing links with music institutions in a country with which one is not familiar, and where there are no links through language or other natural cultural preconditions? Our methodological approach for creating the confidence between the Vietnamese and Norwegian institutions has been based on the idea of creating a mutual, reciprocal dialogue in a long-term perspective. For this it was vital in the first phase that Norwegian and Vietnamese were treated as equal languages in the project, with English as a common third language. A major aspect of the difficulty of understanding between Asian and European culture lies in the interpretation of non-verbal codes, those that have to do with how one understands acceptance or insecurity - in other words how trust is built in a communicative relationship. Everyone knows, of course, that in the arts field, the core of the matter is to recognize your partner's artistic level. An opera house would only want to work with another opera house, first and foremost on the basis of equality, or by transferring knowledge through collaboration. But it has to be a professional exchange to get it to last more than one simple time. So, if a symphony orchestra wants to work with another orchestra, there has to be some kind of recognition, some levels, strategies or qualities that are recognized. Another problem has been the fact that the Vietnamese have experienced that a number of European institutions have shown interest in coming over to "show themselves off" without really contributing anything. They have come for one visit, for instance to make a festival of their own music in Vietnam, and then left

again. In this perspective it has been important for us to show that our project seeks to realize the promises it has made by being a consistent long-term partner. We have considered it important to have Vietnamese project coordinators both in Vietnam and in Norway in order to ensure that dialogue between the institutions is as equal and fleeting as possible.

At Whom is the Project Aimed?

Why seek to strengthen European music tradition in Vietnam? The answer is actually quite simple: It is what the Vietnamese want themselves. Vietnam has centuries old links with Europe, mainly as a result of a French presence there for over one hundred years; the country's active music scene is influenced by the fact that many musicians have studied abroad. For several decades the Vietnamese had strong links with the Soviet Union, and many of the leading musicians there studied at the Tchaikovsky conservatory in Moscow in the 1970s and 80s. The government administration is aware of this situation and wishes to create favorable conditions for professional music life in western style; currently they maintain a symphony orchestra in each of the two largest cities. Many musicians went from Vietnam and overseas to study, before the WWII mainly to France, then from the 1950's to the Soviet Union, and after the collapse of the East Block, some students have gone to other Asian countries, others have gone to Western Europe (like Sweden), and a few have managed to go to the United States. Although working conditions in Vietnamese orchestras are harsh, and nowhere near the expectations of a professional musician in most other countries, the people seem to be coming back after studying, because they want to make a cultural difference in their own country. But classical musicianship is not held in high esteem, jobs are scarce and badly paid, and more often than not you will hear the same musicians playing in the Hanoi Opera, and in the bars or hotels surrounding the opera house.

Additionally we see that Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh city have a functioning music conservatory each with approximately 1500 students. At the conservatory in Ho Chi Minh City there is also a regional training program involving a further 1000 students, so that the total number of students in both cities is somewhere around 4000. So studying music is popular, but not working as a musician.

In the rehearsal hall of the VNSO there is a symbolic painting hanging over the door. It is painted after a photo, so it depicts a true event in the life of the orchestra: The night that the great leader himself, Ho Chi Minh, conducted the orchestra in a concert. I don't know how much he did, was it only a few bars, or perhaps a movement of a symphony? But he is there, pictured in white jacket, with the baton in his hand, with his recognizable beard, turning towards the photographer, and he looks so happy – so incredibly full of sheer happiness, that one understands that this must have been an important event in his life. I think it is worth to remember that the VNSO was formed as late as in 1959. That is before the American war - which is what they call it in Vietnam - even started, and the orchestra has been running all the time, albeit on a very reduced level. But this is in a country that has been at war with intruders for hundreds of years – and still they had the

energy and found the resources to build a symphony orchestra. It was so to speak a symbol of the country wanting to take part in a bigger world and a larger cultural tradition.

Reciprocity

As I stated, the project has as its basis the reciprocity between partners from the two countries. The recipients in Vietnam and Norway have welcomed the initiative, and many of the participants have themselves been pro-active in formulating its contents. This is documented in the minutes of the meetings we have had, and can be further substantiated by emails we have received subsequently. The recipients correspond to administrators in positions of authority in the respective institutions, as well as teachers and artistic personnel.

This perspective was further exemplified and confirmed during our very first meeting at the Ministry of Culture and Information in Hanoi. We have chosen to focus on direct collaboration with the aforementioned institutions, since they are best able to communicate their needs, and to suggest how we can build up an interaction between the music lives of Vietnam and Norway. The Ministry has never produced any obstacles to the project, and we have been granted full freedom to work within the institutions and with our partners.

There is a widespread wish to enable periods of study in Norway for Vietnamese students and musicians, who would further strengthen a mutual understanding of the two countries' different histories. In order to achieve this, we are currently trying to develop the Transposition program.

We believe that this project will lead to increased interest in traditional Vietnamese music in Norway. There is already a widespread interest in 'world music' in Norway; Vietnamese traditions, however, have not had a particularly broad exposure in this context. It will be possible to rectify this situation with visiting performances at various festivals and folk music forums in Norway. Visiting performances such as these will, however, not be part of Transposition to begin with, although contact may be established between interested parties.

We believe that Transposition has the potential to generate a new interest in Vietnamese culture among the Norwegian population, and create an awareness of the present links between Norway and the Vietnamese population in Norway. Indications from the Norwegian-Vietnamese segment suggest that this is a project they would welcome – although it is not a project, which can necessarily speak on their behalf. But very few cultural projects have been aimed at the large contingency of Vietnamese who came to Norway in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and we believe that this project will have a wide audience. The Vietnamese community in Norway has for the main part been very good at integration into the society, while perhaps not so good at communicating their position, nor taking part in the public and political life.

Disposition of the Project

In order to analyze the situation, we tried to divide our work into three areas, of which b constitutes the main focus of the project:

- a. Institution building
- b. Competence building (playing, conducting, and teaching)
- c. Exchange on intellectual property rights

In collaboration with the Music Information Centre Norway (MIC) in Oslo we aim to stimulate increased knowledge and awareness in the field of European classical music performance in Vietnam with the aid of the following initiatives:

- Support for the improvement of the library situation at the relevant collaborating institutions administrative offices.
- Help in establishing links with international music publishers.
- Assistance in developing administrative routines in conjunction with the
- Dissemination of knowledge regarding sheet music and other parts.
- Development of information strategies related to the institutions' public activities

From the autumn of 2007 MIC was able to establish links with leading international partners in the publishing sector, and with music information centers in other countries with a view to formulating concrete initiatives, which could improve the situation for each individual institution. For instance, the project helped build new libraries for each of the symphony orchestras, consisting of scores and parts of about 400 works of the main repertoire of any orchestra, thus making them more or less independent of illegal copying of material, which was the case when we started to work there.

In the autumn of 2007 we also helped organize a national conference in Hanoi on intellectual property rights, where more than 80 persons from the Vietnamese cultural and public sector attended. This was said to be the first conference on the discussion of intellectual property, and it was very necessary, since Vietnam had acknowledged the Berne convention that same year, and obviously needed to improve their work in the field. Since then, a whole new sector is developing in Vietnam, taking care of intellectual rights in all fields, also in cooperation with our partner NORCODE, which is a joint bureau of all Norwegian property rights associations. This link is now working parallel to our initiative.

However, there is still much more to be done in this field, as this work is only in its infancy. In the course of 2010, a strategy will be developed for each of the institutions with the goal of establishing a modern communications service to reach the audience with a more systematic presentation of their activities. We have already done something to update the Internet sites and systems, but need to go beyond that, and train the administration forces, which are the supportive apparatus of each institution.

In the course of 2012 all the institutions should have updated music libraries, better access to international networks of knowledge and development in the arts sector, and thus better functioning information strategies.

Cultural Diversity and Social Change

One of the main aspects of modernization in the world today is the vital aspect of how to maintain cultural diversity under the enormous pressure of multinational media consumer society. I should say that Vietnam is no different from any other country, except for the fact that the government seems to have a bit more active approach to it than in many other countries, and though the country is still quite poor, certain structures exist that make possible some kind of cultural diversity. So how does one go about maintaining cultural diversity in Vietnam? In my opinion, one central aspect in order to understand the Vietnamese communism as opposed to the Eastern European versions of communism in the mid 20th century, one has to see how the Vietnamese government has been willing to maintain cultural diversity over the years, by letting the various ethnic cultures go on with their own lives, more or less. Undoubtedly there has been political persecution here as well over the years, and still there are political prisoners.

When it comes to the field of traditional music, there is a widespread idea that this culture has to be supported in order to survive the fast commercialism that is currently developing. I have not been able to study the topic in detail, but here is what I have understood from meeting and talking to various people over the years. Today each community has its cultural secretary, whose main task is said to be to supervise the practice of ethnic culture in the region. More than 1800 people seem to have this position, as far as I have been told. However, in these years, Vietnam – like the rest of the world - is going through a modernization, which is so fast and widespread that there is a strong fear of seeing a lot of ethnic subcultures disappear if nothing more sustainable is done. And then there is the fear that, since the society was never a capitalist country before, the population is all the more vulnerable to commercialization, since there appears to be very few defense systems against the new impact of the global media and their commercial pressure.

What About the Freedom of Speech?

Many people would probably ask what is our understanding of the freedom of speech in Vietnam. Well, it is definitely a complex issue, which I don't feel qualified to analyze even after having visited the country ten times over the last five years. The truth is, we have ourselves not encountered many problems in meeting or working with anyone we have wanted to work with or meet, during these years. Generally speaking, the government has been very supportive, and never asked for any reports on our work, giving us access to work with whomever we want to. Perhaps the music sector is seen as a potentially unproblematic sector, at least definitely more so than the issues that for instance documentary filmmakers would encounter when trying to work independently in Vietnam. Yet, the fact that almost one hundred international musicians, teachers and conductors meet and

work with the Vietnamese students and professional musicians every year, the fact that several Vietnamese musicians are being offered the possibility to travel to visit conferences, concerts, teaching institutions in the Western world, provide for strong personal links with “open” societies. And yet we know there are problems; from persons and organizations directly involved in the human rights issues. We are informed that the situation is changing, not necessarily to the better in these years. There is obviously a tension in the society about the distribution of power and the freedom of access to the media. But what can we do? Perhaps the best example is what is currently happening between the music teachers of Barratt Due and the students in Hanoi, where one teacher stated that in order to get the Vietnamese students to play better, he had to convince the students that it was not dangerous to look him in the eyes. Perhaps it was a cultural factor that kept the young girl from looking at the mature man while he was playing, but he made her look at him, so that she was able to discover what went on in his mind while he played. In a sense, he managed to create a freedom of expression in her mind. That was perhaps the core of the matter, at least when it comes to music.

The Objective of Transposition

In order to ensure a professional and unbiased evaluation of Transposition the project was evaluated in 2009, meeting with all the participating parties for interviews and discussions, with the aim of writing a report presenting the predominant views and opinions. The report was very positive, and stated that the cooperation practices established in Transposition no doubt created a new understanding of how to build links between international institutions, and could be said to renew the Norwegian strategies for support of institutions in the third world. We believe that this report paved the way for a new period of the project, which we are now about to begin, with renewed effort and strength.

During this period we will continue to develop forms of more in-depth collaborations, letting Vietnamese young talents meet young talents of other countries. We also aim towards training the teachers of the conservatories in music pedagogy. Can there be such a goal as a final goal in the field of music? I don't think so, but if there is one, then it is related to the continuous understanding of how a talent can be nurtured and realized under ever better conditions.

But first and foremost: We are never doing anything that the Vietnamese part does not want to happen.

Objectives

1. Identifying and exploring social issues and problems in urban environments and the space through the arts.
2. Exploring new art forms and creative initiatives in city environments across the spectrum of artistic expressions (music, dance, visual arts, photography, design etc.).

3. Identifying areas for future work and capacity building in urban culture studies.

Our project in Vietnam is not necessarily an experimental project, since it does not pose new questions about where culture may be going. It does not identify new problems or social issues within the society itself. Rather, it may be seen as a modest attempt at supporting what is already there, by helping to solve some of the daily problems of the existing institutions, by providing resources to ensure continuous better training as well as better international networking, by improving the standards of performance on many levels, from the administrative person to the soloist, from the youngest talent to the mature musician. Through this way of collaborating, we try to find answers to some direct needs among the leading musicians of today's Vietnam. Through this work we are slowly reaching towards problem no 3, "Identifying areas for future work and capacity building in urban culture". We know a lot more about the situation in Vietnamese music than we did five years ago, and I am quite sure they also know a lot more themselves, after these first three years. What I have experienced during these years is a growing pride in the music scene in Vietnam, with higher ambitions. In HCMC, the city where politicians now want to build a new opera. In Hanoi, the orchestra is continuously trying to improve their level by inviting leading conductors and soloists, by spending much time training to be better in concerts.

But there are a number of challenges to build on for the future:

- How to improve the links between the music institutions and the general public? Certainly we have only scratched the surface of this field, as the Vietnamese music institutions are very young, and do yet have a long way to go in order to build a history of development of a real arts sector.
- How can one create a closer collaboration between composers and musicians? This aspect has not yet been touched upon, and I believe there is a lot of pedagogical and strategic work to be undertaken before one can establish a closer collaboration and understanding between these groups.
- What is needed in order to be able to speak of the classical music sector in Vietnam as a dynamic sector? This is a vast issue in itself, because it means transforming the present situation from a state of representation to a state of cultivation, meaning that there must be social, cultural and economic incentives in the society that can provide for an increased importance of the state of the performing artist.

Conclusion

So – one may ask – what is really the objectives of Transposition and the development of art? In the written invitation presenting the topic of the 9th Forum on Urban Culture Research, the following problem was presented, and I quote: "How do we design the relations of the arts and a new urban future?"

The Progression of Art in Bangkok's Public Spaces

Kamol Phaosavasdi⁺ (Thailand)

Abstract

This article discusses the developmental process of art projects in Bangkok's public spaces in response to research on harnessing art as a life development tool. Moreover, the article describes how artistic programs may assist in diluting ego-centrism while at the same time, reinforcing individuals' emotional intelligence.

Keywords: *Bangkok Banana, Thai Community Arts Project, Thailand Contemporary Art, Public Art, Empowering Urban Culture, Oral History*

Introduction

The date of December 31, 2012, not only marks the holiday farewell to the previous year, but a welcome to the new one. It is also the grand opening day for the new planet "Ego-centric" which the astronauts recently discovered. It is rich in natural resources, oxygen as well as both arable and buildable land. On this same day, a limited selection of just 10 million "suitable persons" destined to be its inhabitants will take place.

There is only one essential requirement that defines a "suitable person" - they need to prove to the God of "Ego-centric" that they are capable of expanding Earth's orbit.

People around the world were competing to collect redeemable points in the competition to become a planet Ego inhabitant. Individual scores are the aggregate from the year 2001.

Many Earth dwellers wanted to preserve its orbit so consequently they began searching for and creating activities at both the community and district levels to earn more points. These dwellers were proud and knew their own value in belonging to the movement that supports the Earth continuing along its path in the solar system.

The main objective of the activities created by this group of Earth dwellers was to function as a unifying center point of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) reinforcement where everyone achieves a high level of self-satisfaction, learned to love someone and is dedicated to serving society. Although the process of redirecting the ego may seem overwhelming, art and culture can be one universal, strategic source utilized by the people at all levels and of all nations to nourish their feelings of tenderness and sensitivity. Art and culture is a universal mode of expression that the people of all ages and nations can acknowledge and understand. Art and culture is therefore a primary strategy for EQ reinforcement.

After the decision has been announced, there will be 2 groups remaining. Those that qualify and desire to be inhabitants of the new planet "Ego-centric" and those that do not. As for the faith of this last group previous events such as the collapse of the Twin Towers, forest fires, tsunamis, earthquakes, rainstorms, floods, the Holocaust, suicides, economic slowdowns, global warming, bird flu, religious wars, genocides, colonization, nuclear experiments, and others are seen as the punishment or a reciprocal, measured response by nature against humankind's leading negative personalities.

I recognize Art, not only as an aesthetics tool, but also as a tool whereby human beings may learn more about themselves and their societies, This was the basis for my research on the progression of art in Bangkok's public spaces. This shows that art plays a major role in heightening the quality of human lives. Experiences from this project also taught me that art can stimulate emotional development.

This article discusses art and culture not only from the perspective of an artist or art instructor, but also from a former teenager caught up in self-centered enjoyment. My knowledge of art and culture allows me to see myself without arrogance or self-indulgence, remaining humble and trying to understand others.

More importantly, I realize my own value and respect what I have achieved. A person with high personal regard or self-esteem is more open-minded as well as much more aware of other people and their surroundings. Additionally, a person with high personal regard has an awareness that extends beyond ones family. Consequently, I wanted to explore my hypothesis that art and cultural activities slow down the pace and rhythms of life, while at the same time, providing a more delicate world vision and empathy. My central concern is to provide a way or a vehicle enabling others to acknowledge these feelings.

I have a secret hope that the art and culture my student's have absorbed during our short period together will motivate them to apply their acquired knowledge and skills for the benefit of themselves and their surroundings after graduation.

It is never too late to embrace art and culture as a strategy for "EQ Reinforcement" and "Ego-centric Dilution" regardless of age, gender or position. One needs only to open ones mind when another offers it to you. During this transformation the giver and receiver's personalities co-mingle.

I am very pleased to report that I am not alone in my belief in these concepts. They are supported by governmental departments, organizations, academics, artists and students as described below.

Declaration of Cooperation in the Fields of Art and Culture

During Khun Apirak Kosayodhin's term as Bangkok's governor, he was the first to initiate, campaign for, and sign an arts and culture declaration to develop the Bangkok Art and Culture Center. He recognized and accepted the proposal of the Subcommittee for Network and People Participation, since it became clear to him that this could be the first step for both the governmental and private sectors to achieve cooperation in the field of art and culture. It also expedited and consolidated support from the government in the area of creativity research.

After establishing a visionary agenda and organizational objectives they signed the below agreement between itself (under the umbrella of the Bangkok Metropolitan government) and other independent art and cultural organizations. This agreement forms a framework of cultural objectives collectively known as the "Bangkok's Declaration of Cooperation in the Field of Art and Culture".

Joint Declaration of Cooperation in the Fields of Art and Culture by Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) and Alliances

1. The administration recognizes the fact that art and culture contributes to the enrichment of both individual and communal life. We will cooperate to protect the artist's creative expression, liberty, and rights, since this is a fundamental constitutional declaration as well as a human right supported by the United Nations under the category of public participation.
2. The administration recognizes the vital role of artists and art organization in education and shall support them developing and disseminating a holistic body of knowledge to children and youth at all levels, both in formal and informal education systems. We shall promote a well-balanced learning approach which combines artistic expressions, academic knowledge and moral values, and enhances imaginative and creative skills.
3. The administration is committed to promote appropriate applications of modern technology for the creation and conservation of artistic works, for the benefit of academic research, the sharing of learning experiences at all levels, local, provincial city, national, regional and international.
4. The administration is committed to promote the active and meaningful participation of artists and art organizations in the implementation of the policy set forth by the BMA whilst collaboratively creating artistic and cultural initiatives to be carried out in communities and areas under the jurisdiction of the BMA.
5. The administration is committed to promote and strengthen institutions, which are actively engaged in artistic and creative activities at all levels. Drawing on the capacity of art to cross-linguistic and cultural borders and to contribute to mutual understanding between the peoples, we shall facilitate artistic and cultural exchange programs on an international scale. Within this context, particular emphasis must be placed on promoting cultural dignity, moral integrity, transparency and cultural diversity as well as on the encouragement of public participation in order to support sustainable development, and earnestly resolving conflicts and confrontation.
6. The administration shall duly promote and render support to the mass media in presenting to society at large artistic and cultural works, as part of our overall endeavors to publicize artistic and cultural expressions, which in themselves reflect the society.
7. The administration shall act in concerted efforts to promote and create equal opportunity for artistic and creative expression, focusing on those who are disadvantaged and marginalized, for a more just and humane society.
8. The administration shall jointly advocate for a social security program for professional artists and call upon the concerned agencies and organizations both in public and private sectors to come up with formal, systematic and legally

established guarantees in terms of social security, social services and due benefits for those genuinely and professionally engaging in the arts. We are committed to collectively safeguard the rights and benefits earned by those who create artistic and cultural works, as part of the overall scheme to prevent any infringement.

9. The administration shall conscientiously advocate and continuously lobby for the allocation of funds from the concerned agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, in order to enable genuine artistic achievements, bona fide creative endeavors in the arts as well as educational programs and research projects aiming at the advancement of art and culture.

Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Plan 2009-12 Declaration of Cooperation in the Field of Art and Culture

With the visionary aim of Bangkok as a lively, sustainable city, one of its top five main strategies is as follows:

Strategy No. 4

Develop the Bangkok metropolitan area into a culturally rich Mega-City.

Strategy Theme	Socio-cultural Dimensions
Gateway	Regional gateway of art and culture. A city of knowledge and learning in the areas of health and culture
Green	A city with a high quality of life and distinct cultural identity
Good Life	A city comprised of happy families and safe communities

In this article, I will mention the issue of the Strategy in item 4.6 – Contribution of adding Charm to the Bangkok Metropolitan for cultural identity

Main Strategies:

4.6.1 To develop special programs that support historical and cultural preservation.

4.6.2 To recover and renovate the city's landscape.

4.6.3 To support, conserve and re-enliven local culture.

4.6.4 To encourage the participation of community and religious organizations in the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Plan 2009-12.

As a Thai national, artist and art instructor, I had doubts about the ability of government administrators to make it a reality after my first reading of the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration's Plan 2009-12. However, at least they have realized and more importantly believe that the support of art and culture is vital for the strength and security of the Thai people and their country. I consequently, now

know that when the selection date for the inhabitants for planet Ego comes, I will have more friends who prefer to stay on this livable Earth.

Projects Launched by the Government Sector

Bangkok Banana Festival

This is a selection of visual artwork under the artistic direction of Asst. Professor Sansern Milindasuta with the goal of empowering urban culture. But more importantly, it is a governmental program encouraging artists to exhibit their works at an internationally accepted venue, through the establishment of the office of Contemporary Art and Culture.

The “Bangkok Banana” project was first initiated by the director of the Contemporary Art and Culture Center under the Ministry of Culture, Professor Dr. Apinun Poshyananda wanted Thailand to host an exhibition comparable to the Venice Biennale knowing that many Thai artists had successfully exhibited there and a similar exhibition in Thailand would be successful. However, due to the lack of sufficient resources of capital and personnel a replacement in the form of a festival was arranged as an alternative.

The government expectantly views the Bangkok Banana Festival as benefiting both Thailand and the international community. The Thai public may gain access to public art and displays, while the government expects the international visitor to view Thailand as a country safe for visiting, vacation or investment countering the recent political and economic crises.

The Bangkok Banana Festival not only displays visual art, but offers a wide variety of cultural displays from many genres. This will encourage and attract a diverse audience to its centrally located venues, the Bangkok Art Center and the Central World shopping complex, enhancing this areas revenues.

Selection criteria for Bangkok Banana Festival’s art works (Visual, Performing Art, Concert, and Film) are as follows:

1. For visual works they should be readily understandable and relate to the other presentations in the same local area.
2. The selected works need to be engaging and inviting to the passersby.
I.e. inviting one to take a picture, to touch it or otherwise interact with it.
Works that trigger the viewers’ curiosity are more engaging.
3. All works need to be safe for public interaction (especially with regard to children and vandals) as well as robust and designed to survive Thailand’s wet summer monsoon season and high temperatures.

The organizer will launch public relations activities to encourage participation. One example of such an activity is a daily photography competition under the Bangkok Banana Festival theme where winning images are exhibited onsite.

Project Inspired by Education for Empowering Urban Culture “One Book, One Story” and “A Scene in My Memory”

The idea of “One Book, One Story” was that if each child wrote one story for their community library, both the child and the parents would have something to be proud of. During the project, each child imparts a story about their feelings, personal events, and life style. If it were not for this project, these personal stories would never be known.

Using art as a tool to encourage the children in the community to express and expand their point of view enables one to learn and understand more details about the conditions of their living environment. Furthermore, this “One Book, One Story” project can be used as a tool of personal reflection instead of telling. Through the feeling and expression of each child, they can become a way to understand and relate to their creator.

Preeyachanok Ketsuwan started to pay an interest in community art when she was studying as an undergraduate. She holds that effective art projects need to be derived from direct experience in the community. In designing this project she inspired Suwan Waelployngarm, a community leader who gave her helpful ideas for her artwork projects with the community. She only sets the agenda about the art, while letting the community members participate and create freely. She at times, needs to help them understand the particulars of art, but she first tries to understand the participants personally. It was through her working to understand those in the community and talking with the children, that her project concept of one “One Book, One Story” came to be.

She finds her work personally enriching as it is an interpersonal chance to learn and connect with others. For example, a child draws a woman with a coffin, but she actually does not know what the child’s intended meaning is. She admires the beauty of the drawing, but only through a conversation with Suwan Waelployngarm did she learn that the child’s mother had already passed away. In my opinion, the child might want to reflect the last scene of his mother.

Preeyachanok found that there’s no need to have a big visible project and no need to be graceful in term of its appearance. On the contrary the “One Book, One Story” is mentally graceful. In her projects both she and the children learned that “Art is spending a period of time of our lives to see life and earth in a positive way.”

“For my first project, I have a chance to talk to children about their favorite careers. What I realized is how I can make them enjoy making “art” and also help them develop their quality of life in order to have wider perspectives and dreams. They never dream of a great career. On the contrary, they prefer to be receptionists, motorcycle services, fried banana sellers etc. This leads to the creation of “paper doll” to be symbols of each child.”

She begins her “A Scene in My Memory” sessions by using a paper doll to symbolize each child. She has them create their doll under the concept that everyone needs

to have their own dreams in life and specifically ones about their favorite career. They can recall these memories when they grow up. This type of activity can also be serving as a child's preliminary life plan that encourages them to start thinking about their future and imagine how they will be able to fulfill their dreams.

Before she begins the artwork process, she has the children view a video that portrays and discusses the various more mainstream careers such as nurse, policeman, doctor, teacher, lawyer, journalist, etc. in order for them to learn about a wider set of career options. From her observations, being exposed to this type of career movies has influenced the children's choice of careers. Some now desire to be journalists, lifeguards and models etc.

Of course in reality, we cannot know what careers these children will eventually delve into, but it is clear that they have absorbed some additional options. Whether they will continue towards their dream or change again depends upon them and the opportunities they avail themselves of.

She also reported that "A Scene in My Memory" is more successful than expected as the curators at the Museum House allowed her students to present their work in a public exhibition. This provides a rewarding opportunity for these young artists to experience first-hand the value of their artwork and its impact on those in their community. They may experience feelings of social acceptance and encouragement along with the value of their contribution.

Comments on Preeyachanok's Projects

The impact of both of her art programs was not a sudden change of thinking in the community, but rather a subtle, but important initial step in which children's life perspective was expanded either directly or through self-reflection as the result of artistic exploration. Their life vision became wider and their feelings enlivened toward additional career opportunities. This expansion of view can encourage a more positive personal perspective for the participants and if this had ongoing support, EQ reinforcement of the children in the community would be strengthened.

This type of personal development can certainly lead to initiating new ideas beneficial to both themselves and their family that leads to an acceleration of realizing ones potential. In time, as these children grow into adult members of the community, they are qualified to continue the same cycle of development with their own offspring.

Most importantly, the intention and the real learning experience of Preeyachanok's programs emphasize the strength of artistic enlightenment regardless of the particular artistic field or university curriculum.

Art Programs for Enhancing the Family

The Art Community and Empowering Urban Culture

Suwan Welployngarm, graduated from Faculty of Management Administration Krerk College, was currently the leader of Wat Sunthornthammatharn Community.

Nawarat is a master degree student and the daughter of Suwan who are the founders involved in the program. She relayed to me the details of the beginning of these artistic activities for children. They were created, inspired and encouraged by her mother so they can modify the participants' behavior by either reducing negative aspects and/or increasing positive ones.

Whether the community is large or small or it is urban or rural what cannot be avoided are the problems of a lack of education, career opportunities and the personal maturity needed for a successful marriage. These issues if never addressed, cause a problematic repetitive cycle from one generation to the next.

In her own community, she realized with love and understanding that these problems needed serious attention. So in conjunction with her mother she initiated artistic activities specifically to address these community development concerns at both an individual and personal level. Since her mother was already well established as a respected member of the community, a cooperative foundation was established for her programs.

Her mother explained "We start small instead of large by changing a person's individual perspective. This is done with various activities to develop their quality of life by bringing ideas garnished from the study of contemporary art. Specifically, the students are trained to consider what were initially viewed as problems from a pleasant perspective through artistic expression. The students are also guided to develop their capability to produce their own works of art while contemplating the problems found in their community"

Additionally she expressed that "If we can design artistic activities where any social or personal problem is considered as a humorous matter, one becomes intrigued and is thereby better able to thoroughly understand it. Then with an established easy access to the community, it naturally encourages cooperation in problem solving, making a formally difficult process smoother and more pleasant."

For example, in the case of the use of vulgar language people familiar with its use regard the issue as a small matter, but in reality it is a big issue. Inside family conversations it can be an everyday negative influence. She proposed a way to decrease the use of such language. Her project idea was to ask participants for their cooperation in avoiding the use of negative language for one day while they wore an mp3 recorder as a motivating reminder. The participants did not know whether they would succeed or not, but they enjoyed the attempt to solve their habit and agreed to "hit their mouths" as a form of self-punish to reduce this behavior.

One of the larger projects she and her mother conceived was a “Walking Children Road Project” with the idea to use a road as the venue for creative activities. Initially they intended to use a real roadway, but due to issues of security and the impediment of traffic, an access road to a temple was used instead. The temple is adjacent to the community and is viewed as a much more inviting location.

The activities held are based on the needs or requirements of each group of children. For example, the boy group has a B-Boy activity (a form of Break dancing) with a trainer for 3 months in advance. The girl group has an inventive art activity to match current social trends such as producing re-usable “global warming” tote bags. A group of children with severe behavioral issues is appointed as the working team responsible for the venue’s decoration and security to focus their energies in a constructive way. Furthermore, there is an opening concert performed by a student band that is in need of an opportunity for public expression.

The selection of activities is the result of thoughtfully finding activities congruent with the requirements and needs of each group of children.

There is also a group photo activity for the families that was inspired by the results of a questionnaire where it was discovered that some had no family portrait due to the economics of their life style and careers as day laborers. Both Nawarat and her mom realized the importance of the family as a central social foundation and wanted to reflect that in giving the opportunity for each to have a family portrait made together.

A portable professional studio was brought in to the event that had props and a projected background for each family to personalize their family’s portrait. The background settings they could select from were waterfalls, mountains, the beach etc. The families became more excited and involved with each other in this picture-taking event as they made their arrangements with props for it. Through the use of digital technology even family members that could not be there in-person was included in the final family image.

A warm feeling of family, pride and kinship was the outcome of this activity held in a communal setting. This supports my concept that art related activities such as this can reduce severe behavioral problems of teenagers who often destroy public assets. This can be especially true if family photos were attached to the medicine cabinet and other items in the community. It is found that when personal ownership is acknowledged, that it is also more respected. Additionally, these photos serve to symbolize the familial bonds of the community. Those that have a stronger sense of belonging are less likely to rebel or act out against it.

One last activity was the making of team T-shirts for the families. This idea was a response to the observation that some adults could not fully attend due to work or other obligations. Each family would individually design theirs’ as they liked which was printed by easy silk-screening techniques. For some, this experience could develop into a career as custom T-shirt producer in the future.

At the end of the event there was an exhibition to display all of the art works produced by the community with a venue for personal exchanges where people could describe their personal impressions and responses to the pieces. It was found that there was more unity and higher levels of cooperation amongst the community members whether they were adults or children; whereas previously there was a vastness of separation.

Comments on the Art Community Projects by Nawarat Welployngarm

These art projects resulted in an increase of love, caring and attention in their community and a reduction in the neglect of its problems. The little matters such as the use of vulgar language and littering are the result of an inferiority complex residing in ones mind as the result of lack of a personal connection to the community, family and a feeling of scarcity. However, after experiencing these community and family art programs that give an opportunity for people to express their feelings, preferences and needs, they are making the first step on the path of a growing self-confidence and personal esteem.

Viewing these ideas and activities by this mother and daughter team, it reflects that no one knows and understands the problems and needs of a community better than the people living in it. However, it is not only the residents of the community; it is also the individuals as well as governmental agencies that are paying attention to the development of their neighbors. Moreover, members of the community must be willing to cooperate and be responsible for helping each other solve problems or seeking ways to improve their quality of life.

I therefore hope that anyone acknowledging the intention and real practice of this mother and daughter team will in turn pay more attention to their own community. They work towards creating a more livable environment, increasing the love and personal regard between the residents as well as being ready to rectify or reduce its current problems. The periodic gathering of small communities strengthened by community art programs certainly leads to the increase in ones mental, wisdom and EQ strength. This combines to strengthen the nation's ability to fight problems and crises as well. If every community uniformly paid careful attention to each other and did not ignore or neglect their problems they would provide a stronger foundation for Thailand.

Clearly every art program or project mentioned here may be considered small and not worthy enough to win any competition nor bring its originators fame, since upon first glance they appear to be just fun group activities. They belie the fact that their positive and cumulative impact is immeasurable. This is contrary to the common impression that most people have for Thais whom are viewed as non-proactive and their "Mai pen rai" or "it is nothing, let it be" philosophy of life that keeps them smiling, flexible and accepting whatever life has in store for them. I love Thai's usual response of "let it be" and its manifestation of an easy acceptance, since it allows them no matter what situation or environment, to be first in line to rapidly adjust themselves. This includes being readily able to forgive others and let them try again.

I smile every time I recall an image of someone lending assistance to another whether it is a photograph of a woman helping an old man or the hand-in-hand support for tsunami victims. These acts of offering caring assistance happen in every community and we all could be an initiator for contributing to the mental and character strength of our communities. We can encourage the appreciation and responsibility for our fellow men along with our living environment, regardless of age, gender, or educational or income level. It can start from a small point of understanding by paying attention to the requirements and ways of life of those around us as the basis for supportive art activities.

Conclusion

The main core of activities, which all groups mutually recognize are those that implore the people of the world to realize the importance of “self-value”. It is a state where people are content with who they are, what they have and what they have achieved. Some additional core activities are those that encourage others to increase their self-value by devoting their time and surplus resources to cater to the needs of the public.

However, regardless of governmental policy, when it comes to specialized community activities, required public school class or even a strong civil awareness from ones family, all strata of society should assist each other to support these ventures for the betterment of society.

In all seriousness, I totally believe that if the governmental and private sectors worked together in a mutually valued, as well as unanimously realized manner, the “minimization of ego-centric” and the “maximization of EQ” would be realized by December 31, 2012. However, for this to take place communication would need to travel both up and down between the individual, community, district and higher levels. At this future time, the Earth will be very pleasant and those that are required to evacuate to live on planet “Ego-centric” may be very unhappy and would likely want to remain.

With mutual appreciation and EQ contributions in the community, members will have learned to live together happily and how to forgive. They will also have learned how to maintain the human lineage as well as internalizing the life perspective of “it is nothing, let it be” and “take it easy”.

I and a number of “love-the-earth people” who still plan various projects will not do small things quietly anymore. We have a power driven heart and positive thinking to work “strongly and actively enough for all when returning in joy from the December 31, 2012 celebration. It is with confidence that “art” and “culture” can really “minimize ego-centricity and maximize emotional intelligence for all enjoying support and assistance from government and private institutions.”

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Destiny of Traditional Folk Arts in Conditions of Recent Society: *The Case of Vietnam*

Thanh To Ngoc* (Vietnam)

Abstract

The Vietnamese nation consists of fifty-four ethnicities where the folk culture and arts have played an important and dominating role in the life of its people. This paper discusses some of the main issues as follows: First, the folk culture and arts are closely linked with the activities of everyday life. When the society changes, its folk culture, the arts entities have to redefine its values. Elements either disappear or participate in the restructuring of contemporary culture. Then secondly, for the cultural heritages we have to preserve and promote them in their original form if they are quintessential and change those that are changeable. Vietnam inherits both of the above two categories and they provide the basis upon which to compose new ones. The necessary actions should include: restoring the heritages forms and transmitting them to younger people, conducting an inventory, establish a databank, and periodically organize festivals and competitions.

Keywords: *Traditional Culture, Traditional Arts, Vietnam, Vietnamese Traditions, Vietnamese Arts, Destiny of Traditions*

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Background

1. It is common knowledge that Vietnam is a multi-ethnic nation consisting of fifty-four ethnic groups, belonging to some large linguistic families of South-Eastern Asia such as Sino-Tibetan - Myanmar, Mon-Khmer, Viet-Muong, Thai-Kadai, Hmong-Zao, Malayo-Polynesian and others. These ethnic groups do not follow the social development patterns depending upon the historical conditions before the August 1945 revolution.

They can be divided into the following main categories:

- The society existing at the end of the primitive communal regime contains vestiges of an undeveloped democracy. In this culture only the folk culture and arts existed. One can still encounter this societal life style among ethnic groups living in the deep jungles of the North and Central Highlands.
- In the pre-feudal society only folk culture and arts existed.
- It was in the feudal society where both folk and professional culture and arts existed.

Hundreds of small sub-ethnicity local groups are incorporated into these fifty-four ethnicities with different names and dialects. Besides the majority Viet who settled mainly in the plains of the Red River Delta in the North and the Mekong River Delta in the South, there are fifty-three ethnic minorities located mainly in the mountain areas. Although not divided into isolated territories each ethnicity and local group has its own traditional culture and arts. Vietnamese culture consequently, is rich and abundant with diverse nuances.

2. In the past, the professional scholarly culture and arts could only be found among the Viet majority. The cultural and artistic components were popular mainly in the intellectual and aristocratic circles constituting only 2 percent of the Vietnamese population. However, the folk culture was associated with the remaining 98 percent residing in the countryside. *This reflects the eminent and dominating role of the traditional folk heritage of the Vietnamese people.*

3. Generally, the folk culture and arts are organic components of people's everyday life. *The creation of folk culture was originally linked to or motivated by social or religious-spiritual activities in response to people's needs.* This is the environmental and social context where artistic forms and expression were created and developed. They can be differentiated as follows:

a. Artistic expressions relating to different stages of human life from birth to death:

Lullabies, children's games, songs, dances; majority etiquette songs and dance; love duets, (alternating singing between boys and girls); marriage-wedding songs and dances; customary and artistic activities for celebrating a new house; long cycle of songs for shamanistic healing; prayer songs and dances celebrating the birthday of elders at the ages of 60, 70, 80, 90, and 100; archaic epics recitals, and lastly, funeral laments.

b. Artistic expressions relating to the different stages of cultivating crops: As a means for “communicating” with nature and supernatural forces these activities take mythical forms. For example, springtime ceremonies with songs, dances, games of villagers worshipping the village’s tutelary deity and their ancestors. This involves praying for prosperity, good crops, abundant rain, and a ceremony for closing the doors of rice-storage structures etc.

Serving those above-mentioned social functions, the folk artistic expressions became inseparable components of village cultural life. For example, in order to lull a baby to sleep, people created a lullaby, thereby it becomes an “organic component” of the culture. The folk people cannot imagine the lulling baby without the lullaby. By the same reason, the people never sing the lullaby outside of the lulling activity. *The lullaby is a dual-functional entity. It is an element of everyday life’s activity (i.e. used in lulling), while at the same time; the lullaby is also an artistic creation.*

A similar case are musical pieces played by the gong ensemble in the Buffalo Sacrifice of the Highlander-Minorities people where the gong pieces are both a religious-customary activity and at the same time it is a musical creation. This gong piece is how the people “dialogue” with deities and supernatural forces through their belief that the gong’s sound is always a miracle language. In the past these musical pieces were not played outside of the Buffalo Sacrificial rite.

4. *Folk culture and arts are social entities that always change parallel to society.*

One example are the values associated with contemporary society where the changes in the fashion of clothes is one example. A second is the affirmation of crystallized values that enrich the traditional national culture. For the latter there are two categories to discuss:

a. Preserving the original form of folk artistic expressions and *promoting* them through the activities of people’s everyday life. Preservation is an effective way to protect the values and the fund and memory of our creative history. *Promotion and integration of the values and expressions of heritage contributes to building the contemporary culture of a nation.* That is why nowadays the Vietnamese people continue to practice many forms of traditional folk arts.

b. Inheriting the values and forms of traditional folk arts’ expressions is the basis for creating and developing new artistic compositions meeting the demands of contemporary life. Thus, preservation and promotion are the necessary conditions and basis for inheritance and development. In turn, inheritance and development guarantee the continuous existence of heritage and the renovation and development of artistic traditions. As the result, the artistic tradition continues to survive; the national cultural identity will be protected, while enabling new created elements to be adopted.

Aims and necessary actions

In the context of integration and globalization, as a developing country, the society of Vietnam experiences accelerating changes toward industrialization, modernization and urbanization. This new societal structure has gradually broken the structure of the former agricultural society, including the structure and functions of folk arts. *Nowadays, all the folk artistic expressions have lost their original traditional functions in life and their social environments.*

For example, the rowing songs are no longer a unifying component when boats are powered by a motor. The same applies to the destiny of the hand-pounding rice songs and dances due to milling machines.

Moreover, during the past thirty years of resisting two wars the Vietnamese people have not had the conditions of peace to cultivate their traditional cultural and artistic activities. Two new generations are growing up without the experience of practicing traditional artistic activities. During the same time, the old traditional masters of folk arts who could transmit the cultural heritage are being lost to old age.

So, released from the longtime wars, among other things, the Vietnamese are faced with the real danger of the disappearance of all valuable activities, expressions and forms of their traditional culture.

In order to avoid such big losses, Vietnam created a national program entitled "Safeguarding our traditional cultural and artistic properties". It began in the 1980s and continues researching and archiving the traditional culture and arts from the period of 1956-1979 in the North and from 1976-1979 in the South. In order to meet the objectives of this program, they developed a working plan with the following phrases:

1. Inventory

Vietnam has to revise and assess the real situation of our folk arts' fund. Thus, they have appointed the Provincial Department for Culture (Ministry of Culture) in collaboration with the Provincial Branch of the Association of Vietnamese Folklorists (AVF) to conduct research via questionnaire to investigate the condition of traditional folk arts.

2. Action plan

From the result of this inventory, Vietnam now has a quantitative assessment of the state of its folklore's fund. From this inventory, the quantified views are as follows:

- Extinct traditions, which absolutely cannot to be revitalized: 20 percent
- Traditions still existing in people's memory, but in real danger of disappearance due to long-term neglect: 80 percent

As mentioned above, *our recent society is changing fundamentally and rapidly.* Before, the folk arts *were a unified-organic component of cultural life.* This was the life of farmers who cultivated rice either on the plain's rice-field or on the burn cleared land in the mountains. They lived in rural communes where the

individual existed only as a communal member. Now, in conditions of the contemporary society, with the farmer being recognized as an individual, *the entity of traditional culture is de-structuralized*.

As a result, the components of former traditional culture, may disappear forever (the custom of blackening the teeth, for example) or it may continue to exist as a single separate artistic expression with its own artistic values. In response to the real conditions of traditional folk artistic expressions Vietnam took some necessary measures as follows:

- Vietnam has restored traditional cultural-artistic forms and expressions from the masters who are still alive and capable of transmitting knowledge and skills of any specific genre.

This restoration is always welcomed by the public, because the villagers recognize that the revitalized cultural artistic form are creations of their ancestors and their unique cultural quintessences.

So the young villagers are eager to learn what the old masters impart. As a result, these villages are populated by four different age groups involved in the learning of traditional culture.

Three age groups (20-30, 30-50, and 50-60+) have two tasks; *performing* the folk arts forms and *training* those aged from 8-20.

In this form of restored cultural activities, the art forms can be revitalized and survive in their inherent cultural environments and contexts. Thus, their social, religious and artistic functions and values will be preserved.

For a wider dissemination in implementing the revitalizing of the cultural activities Vietnam organized the recording of them by modern audio-visual equipment to produce free DVDs.

- Promoting the artistic values of the traditional artistic forms Vietnam also presents them on stage at regional, national, and even in some cases, at international festivals. However, in order to respond to the demands of the performance stage, the traditional artistic forms had to undergo some changes such as performers needing make up, and the performer donning attractive, multicolor attire. Also either the song or the dance is obliged to be accompanied by the music of a live orchestra.

Of course, this does not always entirely preserve the authenticity of the item.

- Vietnam classified, computerized and arranged the collected materials in different systems according to their social function and artistic features. From the year 2000 till now Vietnam is in process of creating an archival databank of these materials.

- Vietnam organizes a bi-annual festival for the performance of certain genres of folk arts such as the National Festival of Lullaby. Fifty-four ethnicities that include their local sub-ethnicity groups participate. Additional activities are the Festival of the Gong Ensembles of the Highlanders, a festival of competitions of folk dances and the festival of love duets. There are also exhibitions for the folk arts of graphic painting, ceramics, porcelains, decorated costumes of minorities and other different handicrafts.
- Since 2000, in order to honor and encourage the merits of the masters of traditional folk arts, the Association of Vietnamese Folklorists rewards them with the honorific title “National Masters of Folklore.” To date Vietnam has rewarded one hundred and eighty-two masters among the fifty-four ethnicities.

Conclusion

Thanks to the above-mentioned measures, Vietnam has preserved, promoted and revitalized many ethnic forms and expressions of traditional folk arts through which it gradually encourages the younger generation to turn their interest to the values of tradition. In summary, I would like to emphasize the most important facts:

The traditional folk culture and folk arts cannot exist as a social-historical entity as in the past. In the climate of contemporary society it has to undergo a process of destructuralization. But it does not disappear as a whole, even though a number of its components risk to be lost forever. Its central elements and remaining components will survive in a different form, as described above. *The people of Vietnam can report that they are participating effectively in a new process of culture restructuring, as they themselves become organic-unified components of the culture of contemporary society. Is this the new destiny of traditional folk arts?*



Art and Transformation - Models of Art Outreach Programs for Individual and Social Rehabilitation and Development

- **Developing Urban Creative Communities Through The Arts in Thailand, Canada, and USA**
Frances Anderson (USA)
- **Dialogic Performance: Towards a Pedagogy of Transformance**
Dan Baron Cohen (Brazil)
- **Dance House: European Models of Folk Music and Dance Revival in Urban Settings**
Svanibor Pettan (Slovenia)

Developing Urban Creative Communities through the Arts in Thailand, Canada, and USA

Frances Anderson⁺ (USA)

Abstract

Similarities and differences among arts programs for persons with disabilities are discussed with a focus on Very Special Arts Art programs in the USA and the Art for All programs in Thailand. Other examples of arts programs for individuals with special needs in the USA and Canada are also presented. A case for ways the Art for All programs can become an instrument for social change and a model of a creative urban community is also made.

Keywords: *Arts Communities, Disabilities, Social Change*

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Introduction

This article will discuss some of the similarities and differences in the VSA Arts program (VSAA) in the U.S. and the Art for All programs in Thailand. It will also showcase a few other arts programs in the US and Canada. Then it will make a case for how Art for All can become a creative urban community and an instrument for social change.

In 1976, the National Committee: Arts for the Handicapped (NCAH), was formed at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Since then, NCAH has evolved into a tour de force in arts advocacy for underserved persons with disabilities. In 1985, NCAH changed its name to Very Special Arts. In 2009, VSA became VSA Arts: The International Organization on Arts and Disability. For the discussion below the term VSAA will be used. The VSA Arts network is operating throughout the USA and in 65 countries. VSAA receives federal and supplementary state and local funding in addition to private support. Each year 7 million people participate in an enriching VSAA program. VSAA also has an online art gallery featuring artwork by disabled artists from around the world.

The following are the four essential principles that guide VSAA programming and initiatives:

- Every young person with a disability deserves access to high quality arts learning experiences.
- All artists in schools and art educators should be prepared to include students with disabilities in their instruction.
- All children, youth, and adults with disabilities should have complete access to cultural facilities and activities.
- All individuals with disabilities who aspire to careers in the arts should have the opportunity to develop the appropriate skills.

Inclusion teaches us that all, means all. Everybody, no exceptions. The arts invite people to leave familiar territory, to explore new answers, and seek new questions. The arts offer a means to self-expression, communication, and independence. By learning through the arts, students become lifelong learners, experiencing the joy of discovery and exploration, and the value of each other's ideas.

VSAA is committed to driving change – changing perceptions and practice, classroom by classroom, , community by community, and ultimately society. (<http://www.vsarts.org/x16.xml>)

I have been involved with VSAA from its inception in 1976 serving as a presenter, researcher, evaluator, and fundraiser.

One way VSAA has been able to garner support for its programs and showcase the abilities of persons with disabling conditions, has been to partner with state and local cultural arts programs. This partnership has facilitated the integration of persons with handicaps with non-disabled individuals. The general public has had

the opportunity to observe and interact with all individuals, disabled or not. Thus through the VSAA organization, individuals with disabilities have been brought out of the shadows. Through art, music, drama, dance, and creative writing activities, these individuals have broken down barriers, and increased the awareness of the artistic endeavors of all.

Art for All

As a Fulbright Senior Specialist to Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in 2008, I was introduced to the Art for All project/movement. Through the unceasing efforts of Professor Dr. Channarong Pornrunroj, a series of arts camps varying in length from three to five days have been held throughout Thailand for the past 15 years. These camps have been specifically arranged for persons with hearing, visual, physical, and mental handicaps. To my knowledge, there has been no other large effort to provide arts experiences for persons with disabilities in Thailand.

I was immediately struck by the commitment and compassion of the Art for All staff. As a leader for social change, Pornrunroj hired several staff members with disabilities. (Few, if any, in Thailand would hire someone with a handicap). As I understand it, Thai families that have a member with a handicap keep that person sequestered away from public view. The reasoning, as it was explained to me, was done to protect the disabled individual and the family from shame and ridicule. It has been through the Art for All camps that observers from the mainstream Thai culture have become aware of persons with disabilities, and begin to see past their handicap to see their abilities. Since its beginnings in 1997, Art for All has become much more than a series of camps. It is a positive force for both creating communities and promoting positive social change. In this way, persons with disabilities have been brought into the light of day and mainstream culture.

Art for All was developed to accomplish the following four objectives:

1. Instill in young people a respect for human life and to teach them to be upstanding members of society with a contribution to make.
2. Raise the self-esteem of the underprivileged and the handicapped. Moreover, to assist them in achieving their full potential and give their lives greater dignity.
3. Promote sustainable development by encouraging society to show respect for other human beings in all their diversity.
4. Help participants discover a roadmap of development that allows them to live their lives with dignity and not as burdens on society (Pornrunroj, 2006).



Figure 1: Art For All banner. (c) 2008 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

Three Art for All Camps

I have been a participant-observer at three of the Art for All Camps. In 2008, I observed the hill tribe Art for All Camp in Northern Thailand. The hill tribes have had a long history of marginalization. The mainstream Thai culture has held prejudicial attitudes toward these hill tribes. This camp focused more on instilling an appreciation and reverence for each camper's tribal culture. By making an effort to focus on tribal traditions, and by making the effort to bring Art for All to one of the tribal villages, the participants began to realize their own importance.



Figure 2: Art for All in Akha camp. (c) 2008 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.



Figure 3: Hill Tribe group paints on the earth using dry tempera paint. (c) 2008 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

This was a basis for showing the campers just how important they are and how important their culture is. The Art for All camp I observed had a focus on the use of artistic materials that were available in the villages. Thus, straw became a material for making animals and baskets. The ground became a canvas for drawing with tempera, and for using leaves, and other nature objects to create pictures.



Figure 4: Hill Tribes Straw animals (a readily available materials). (c) 2008 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

One additional factor that made the Art for All Hill Tribe camp meaningful was the media coverage of the events. This was concrete evidence of the campers' artistic work showing the connection to their cultural heritage, and how the two items came together to become an important and newsworthy event (Tuenjai Deetes, personal communication, July 20, 2009).

The July Art for All Camps

I have been able to be a participant-observer of two very large Art for All camps held in July 2008 and July 2009. I witnessed the effects of the beautiful settings in which each was held. This immediately put campers in a very different and inspiring surrounding.



Figure 5: Setting for one of the Art for All July camps. (c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

Many things impressed me about both these 5-day camps. Disabled artists were presenters thus providing role models of what can be accomplished in spite of so-called physical, emotional, and mental limitations.



Figure 6: Hill Tribes Straw animals (a readily available materials).
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.



Figure 7: Artist painting with her feet.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

Professional artists were the leaders of the numerous visual art, music, and dance activities offered every day. This reminded me of a statement a professor of special education made at a conference a few years ago: “If one can only teach one musical idea or concept, let it be Mozart.” This is exactly what was being offered at the Art for All camps. The campers circulated through a number of activity stations and were exposed to some of the very best traditional Thai music and dance.



Figure 8: Traditional Thai Musicians. The group of children has received recognition from the royal family.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.



Figure 9: Traditional Thai Dance Group.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

Art for All Campers' Experiences

To provide a “face” to the Art for All participants I have included some brief vignettes that I observed during my Art for All experiences.

I am often asked about the efficacy of having persons who are blind included in two-dimensional activities. As an answer I offer the following. In one painting activity a group of campers were told about the duck-billed platypus that is a strange animal that lives in Australia. Pictures of this animal were shown. (Note: the presenter had tried to bring a stuffed toy in the form of this animal, but was unable to locate one). I noticed one girl that was completely blind. There was a volunteer helping her. The girl used her hands to figure out where on the page she was going to paint the duck-billed platypus. Then the volunteer gave her a paintbrush and told her what color paint was on the brush.



Figure 10: Paint is being mixed for the girl who cannot see (on right).

(c) 2009 Anderson.

Reproduced by permission.

It was amazing to see this camper execute the painting.



Figure 11: Volunteer hands a paint brush to the girl so she can finish the painting.

(c) 2009 Anderson.

Reproduced by permission.



Figure 12: This is the very first painting the girl who is blind created.

(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

This camper wanted to take her painting home to show her parents. This was the very first painting she had ever created. Unfortunately, all artwork was kept, so that no camper could take home artwork created at the camp. I photographed her picture and made a print off it so she could take her work home.

This next photo shows a teenager and his painting of the platypus. He was in the same group and is hearing impaired. He “said” he had studied art.



Figure 13: Boy showing his painting of a platypus. He is hearing impaired and has had some art classes. 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

In one activity a well-known television reporter was interviewing campers while they were video taped. The aim was to increase self-esteem and to encourage campers to talk. One fellow who was blind stood up and told the reporter that this was his first Art for All camp. He was so motivated by his experience that he said he wanted to study law and become an advocate for persons with disabilities.



Figure 14: Boy who is blind (on the right) being interviewed about his Art for All experience. (c)2008 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

During another art activity, I noticed a girl in a wheelchair drawing. With the help of an interpreter I asked her how she was selected for the camp. She told me that she had always liked art and had asked her teacher if she could attend the camp.



Figure 15: Girl drawing on a lapboard.
(c) 2009 Anderson.
Reproduced by permission.



Figure 16: Here is what the girl is drawing.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

As the reader can see, this girl was quite a good artist for an 11 year old.

Finally one inspiring moment occurred during a clay activity. One boy who was in a wheel chair had almost no control of his arms. Two volunteers removed his shoes and placed clay on a board so he could manipulate the material with his feet. These images speak to the excitement that this camper experienced as he used his toes to move the clay.



Figure 17: Boy using his feet to manipulate clay.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.



Figure 18: Boy showing his excitement about what he has made.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission

Unique Features of the Art for All Camps Volunteers

Having been involved in VSAA festivals for more than 10 years in the United States, I noted several unique parts of the Art for All camps.

Volunteers

As noted in the observations above, the Art for All camps could not function without a large cadre of volunteers. Many were university students. Some were boy scouts and girl scouts. Others were just interested and compassionate individuals from all walks of life. The campers had a direct impact on the volunteers. Volunteers could see for themselves what the campers with disabilities could accomplish.

Setting

Rarely has the VSAA festival been an overnight event. While the festivals might run for several days the festival participants were not put together in a camp situation. I think a major part of the impact of Thailand's Art for All programs is due to the events being set as camps, rather than merely a day program. The individuals who participated spent five days together in this setting. The mere factor of the Art for All events being a 5-day camp had an immediate effect on the participants. For the first time, individuals with disabilities were spotlighted in an important way. They discovered that there were others just like them with the same challenges.

Organization

Having administered VSAA events, I am very aware of the effort that is required to produce an arts event. Such an event is made more challenging when its focus is persons with disabilities. I was extremely impressed with the attention to detail required to provide an Art for All camp. One had to consider all of the needs of the campers (medical, emotional, and physical), the types of arts activities, and who was to lead them. Additionally, the organizers had to consider how artistic media was distributed, arts stations were arranged, and how groups of campers were to circulate through each art activity stations. Coordination of important visitors – including one visit by the Thai Princess – was yet another example of great organization. There were many other items I could cite, however I think the reader gets some sense of all that was involved.

Other Issues

In addition, there are many other organizational issues to consider: fundraising, camper selection, recruitment of presenters and volunteers, to name a few. Based on my three decades of teaching and working with children with disabilities, I noted again and again the quality of the organization and presentations at the Art for All camps.

Five Persons with Different and Complimentary Abilities Make One Genius.

Dr. Channarong Pornrungrroj has developed a guiding principle called “the Creative Cooperation of Five.” This is a guiding theory and philosophy of the Art for All camps for persons with disabilities. By bringing together five people with different types of handicaps and complementary gifts, one creative genius can be formed.

Thus one person, who is blind, can contribute verbal and listening abilities. One person who is deaf can become the eyes for the group of five. An individual with a physical handicap (for instance, one who is missing an arm or a leg, or is wheelchair bound) can be the thinking part of the genius, i.e., the brain for the group. The person with intellectual challenges contributes to the group's mobility with their legs and arms. The final member of the group of five is someone without disabilities who becomes the group facilitator helping to coordinate the contributing abilities of the other four. According to Dr. Channarong Pornrunroj:

All those who participate in the Art for All events are given challenges to encourage creative problem solving through the arts. Art for All camps are specifically set in beautiful and peaceful locations that inspire the entire creative process and encourage peaceful thought and reflection. The various arts experiences are planned to offer an appropriate outlet for frustration and stress. Additionally, all are focused on producing arts works and performances that are meaningful and artistic. The social interactions that occur during the creative processes foster greater compassion and understanding of each person's differences and similarities. Not only are the creative mental processes stimulated, the very manipulation of artistic media strengthens fine motor skills. (Pornrunroj, 2006)

The principle of five equals one is a fantastic concept, idea, and philosophy. As campers moved around the various art stations, many were placed in groups that had persons with the 4 types of the disabilities represented in the camp. Each group was led by a camper without handicaps. In some instances, I observed group members working well together despite their individual limitations. However in the specific reality of the art stations and presentations at the Art for All camps, some special education specialists observed that it was not always possible to totally implement the five equals one ideal (Ross, personal communication, July 7, 2008). To do so might require additional training for both the non-disabled leader and each selected disabled group member. Added practice accompanied by very careful selection of the disabled members of each group might result in greater success of the five equals one genius idea. Also not every group, no matter the composition of its members is able to work as a team. This fact is true for groups with no members who have disabilities (Yalom, 1995). However the five equals one genius is a worthy goal and philosophy to work toward.

Training for Presenters

In implementing VSAA festivals, we discovered that there was a specific need to train presenters so that they could understand and adapt presentation methods and materials to ensure a very highly successful outcome. Currently VSAA provides such training through its Communities of Practice Programs. The aim of the program is to support educators to design high quality, inclusive arts learning opportunities for students. The program supports participants to:

- Design engaging, flexible, and meaningful standards-based arts curriculum.
- Design valid assessment tools to inform differentiated instruction.

- Collect and document student-learning evidence.
- Share insights about student learning and useful inclusive instructional strategies with the field of education. (<http://www.vsarts.org/x2252.xml>).

During the Art for All July camps, I observed a mixture of presenters with obvious special training along with others that had no such training. Knowledge of the abilities of the campers and ways to adapt artistic media is essential, especially for safety reasons (Anderson, 1994). I urge future planners to consider special training and screening of planned arts activities to eliminate possible medical and safety concerns. It is also extremely important to offer arts experiences that are disability appropriate and age appropriate. I also think parents and volunteers would benefit from this training; indeed, parents might contribute to such important and necessary training.

Number of Participants and Length of Art for ALL Camps and VSAA Events

Two other differences between the VSAA festivals and the Art for All camps as I experienced them, relate to the scope and size of the events. It is much easier to plan and implement a festival or camp that is only a day or two and is planned for a small number of participants. When events are longer and planned for a larger number of participants, greater organization, planning, and coordination are required. There is always a danger of these events becoming too successful leading to events with more and more participants. With larger events comes the probably of the planners being overwhelmed and more problems occurring.

I wonder if the time has come in the life of the Art for All programs to consider smaller events. Certainly the economic downturn has had an impact on finding sufficient funding for large camps. A series of smaller Art for All events could focus on arts skill-building that would carry over into the daily activities of the participants. In fact, such events could be training opportunities for future residents of the proposed Art for All Village.

As the Art for All enterprise plans for the Art for All Village, it is important to be aware of research conducted in the U.S. on the effects the arts have on individuals with, and without, disabilities.

Arts experiences can lead to learning skills that carry over into academic learning and vocational preparation. This idea has been documented (with systematic “hard” data) in both the U.S. and in Canada (Deasy, 2002; Douglas & Williams, 1994; Eisner, 2002. Eisner, 1998; Gerber & Guay, 2006; Graziano, Ingram & Riedel, 2003; Peterson, & Shaw, 1999; Harth, 1999; Marantz, 1998; Nyman & Jenkins, 1999; Sallis, et al). Could there be an in-depth skill development and learning component for some Art for All campers?

Prolonged exposure to the arts means having six weeks or more of arts instruction in each art media (art, music, drama, dance, and writing). This approach differs from what is currently practiced by Art for All planners. When schoolchildren in the U.S. have a prolonged exposure to the arts, they have higher math scores, they read at a higher level and their ability to form relationships increases (Jensen, 2001).

There have been numerous funded projects in the U.S. that have demonstrated the link between learning in the arts and academic learning. Most recently the work by Jensen (2001) reported in his book, *Arts with the brain in mind*. Jensen is a scientist trained in all forms of research. His book has caused those who are outside of the arts (neither trained in the arts, nor arts advocates) to support increased arts instruction for all students in public schools.

This is an approach that arts professionals have advocated for decades without changing opinions of administrators and other laypersons. That is, until Jensen (2001), began to study how arts involvement impacts the developing brain.

Examples of Urban Creative Arts Communities - Le Fil D'Ariane

Over 30 years ago in Montreal, Canada, a gifted artist and special education teacher established a textiles workshop for adults with mental retardation. This workshop is called Le Fil D'Ariane and 20 artisans come daily to create beautiful artwork. The artisans (artisan is the name given to the 20 participants) create all the designs. Five staff members teach the textile technique used. I had the opportunity to visit this unusual studio and interview its founder. I concluded that this place was one of the most aesthetic places in which one could work.

The setting for this workshop is in a beautifully renovated warehouse in the old part of the city. The setting itself is inspiring.



Figure 19: Warehouse where Le Fil d' Ariane is located. (c) 2009 Anderson Reproduced by permission.



Figure 20: Inside the workshop. (c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by permission.

Art therapy is also used to help the artisans deal with emotional issues such as frustration, anger, and disappointment. No artwork produced during the art therapy sessions is ever used for a retail textile.

(<http://www.atelierlefiledariane.org/La%20girafe%20g%E9ante.html>)

Le Fil D'Ariane is an urban creative community. Artwork is sold and the artisans also receive a governmental allowance, which is given as though it is a wage for the work. The artisans have greater self-esteem because they also are earning funds. Le Fil D'Ariane could be one model to consider as the Art for All Village is being planned.



Figure 21: Stitchery by CF.
(c) 2009 Anderson. Reproduced by Permission.



Figure 22: Noah's Ark Wool stitchery on cloth.
23.5 inches by 29.5 inches. Created at Le Fil D' Ariane,
Montreal Canada. (Collection of F.E. Anderson.
(c) 2010 Reproduced by permission.)

Because the Art for All Village will be a special creative community that will be set in an urban environment, there will be greater opportunities for showcasing the abilities of those who have disabilities to the mainstream community. It can also be a means for bringing people with many differences together. It will have both a unique part (the arts executed by the residents) and an integrative function perhaps represented by joint projects in which everyone contributes.

Creative Growth

Thirty-five years ago in Oakland, California Creative Growth was established. I had the good fortune to visit this special place. It is set in a huge urban storefront. It is a very busy place with one section where life skills classes are held. There are several other sections where the artists can work.

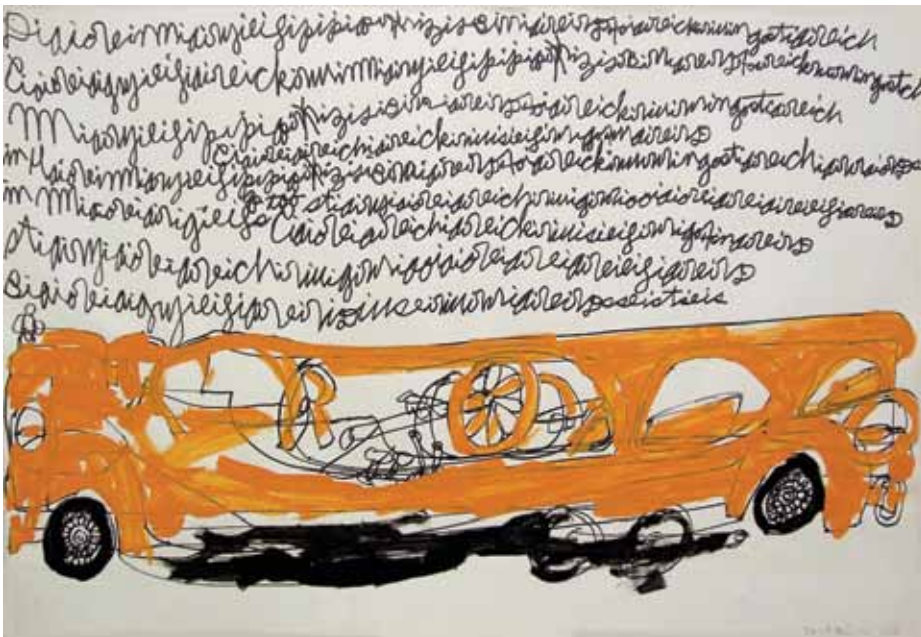


Figure 23: Drawing by Dwight Mackintosh. (c) Reproduced by permission of Creative Growth.
(<http://creativegrowth.org/gallery/dwight-mackintosh>)

The Creative Growth Art Center serves adult artists with developmental, mental, and physical disabilities by providing a stimulating environment for artistic instruction, gallery promotion, and personal expression. Artwork fostered in this unique environment is included in prominent collections and museums worldwide. Creative Growth brings in professional artists from the Greater San Francisco Bay Area and elsewhere to teach. The artwork produced by the participants is displayed in a professionally run gallery next door to Creative Growth. (<http://creativegrowth.org>)

During the day, there are special classes in socialization, and independent living and counseling. Some of the workshop artists have a large following of art collectors. Internationally recognized scholar of outsider art, John MacGregor has written a book about one of the artists: Dwight Mackintosh: The Boy Who Time Forgot (1990). More recently Borenzstein (2004) has written a book about several Creative Growth artists.

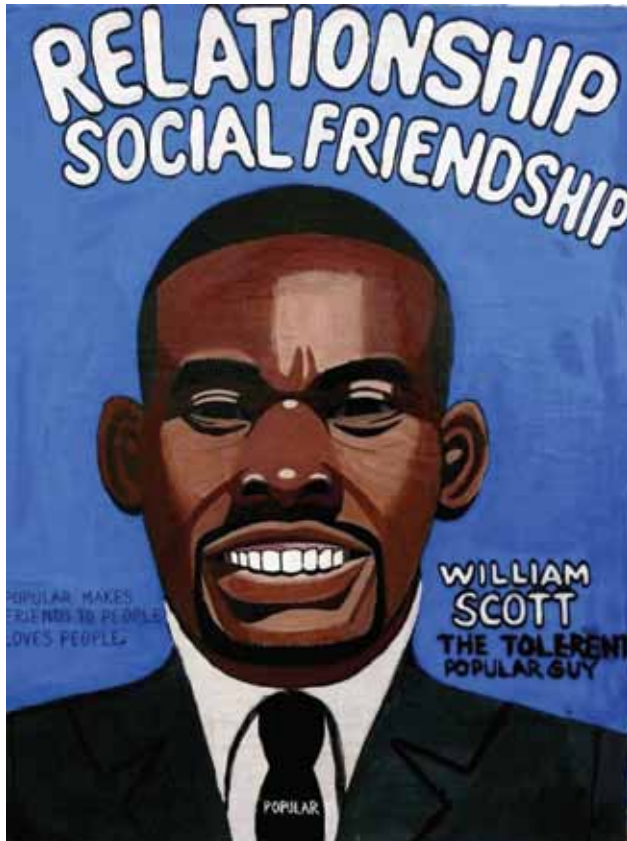


Figure 24: Drawing by Dwight Mackintosh.
(c) Reproduced by permission of Creative Growth.
(<http://creativegrowth.org/gallery/dwight-mackintosh>)

National Institute on Arts and Disabilities (NIAD)

In 1982 in California, the NIAD was founded. This is an artist studio for adults with a variety of disabilities. There are approximately sixty artists with disabilities

who come to NIAD five times a week. They have studio space and are given special instruction by artists. Basic life skills, money management, and socialization skills are also provided. The NIAD has four goals:

- It develops the capacity for creative expression in people with developmental and other physical disabilities, increasing their sense of personal identity and pride.
- It provides a gallery and other exhibition opportunities for their work, thereby validating their art, enhancing their self-esteem and providing them with earnings for their personal use.
- It fosters socialization and inclusion at the center and on field trips to museums, art galleries, artists' studios and community events.
- It increases the public's understanding of the artistic ability of people with disabilities (<http://www.niadart.org/about.html>)

Additionally NIAD has a gallery and describes the artist's work as outsider art. There is also an electronic gallery of artwork by its artists. The NIAD is another model of a creative community for adults with a variety of disabilities.



Figure 25: Woodcut by Ray Brown
(c) NIAD. Reproduced by permission of the National Institute of Art and Disabilities.
(http://www.niadart.org/Brown_Ray_bio_bw.html)



Figure 26: Crazy Bird Acrylic on Paper by Maria Radilla.
(c) NIAD. Reproduced by permission of the National Institute of Art and Disabilities.
(<http://www.niadart.org/Pages/Radilla.html>)



Figure 27: Telephone mixed media by Jean McElvane (c) NIAD. Reproduced by permission of the National Institute of Art and Disabilities. (http://www.niart.org/Jean_McElvance_bio_bw.html)

The Art For All Village

In reflecting on the themes for this first journal issue it is obvious to me that these Art for All camps that have been held for more than 15 years constitute a movement. It is a movement dedicated to social change because it attempts to bring persons with disabilities into the mainstream of life. As plans move forward toward establishing the Art for All Village, this social change will be more evident because many more persons from the main Thai culture will be able to observe and understand that persons with disabilities are persons first and foremost.

Research Issues and Possibilities

In the first week of my 6-week visit to Chulalongkorn University I was asked to meet with representatives from the central administration. One of the questions asked was: “How can the outcomes of the Art for All programs and camps be measured?” Is it possible to measure something as vast and complex as the Art for All programs?

My answer was, yes! This answer was based on my doctoral training in research and my understanding of both the arts and how to implement complex research studies. It was also based on a countrywide evaluation project I completed for VSAA (Anderson, 1991). Let me explain.

The National VSAA Evaluation Project

In 1990, VSAA asked me to develop a way to provide both qualitative and quantitative evaluation data on its activities and programs across the U.S. My research team’s method involved careful examination of the VSAA goals. Our research had to be based on these goals.

We observed several VSAA sponsored events in three geographically representative and demographically representative states. The VSAA selected these states due to their exceptional programs in the arts for individuals with disabilities. We did site visits and interviewed administrators, artists, participants, parents, and teachers. When gathering data, a series of case studies of participants and arts providers was compiled and became the qualitative part of the research study. Data from interviews and our own observations enabled the development of a multiple series of questionnaires (Seidman, 2006).

These brief questionnaires polled parents, teachers, artists, the individual with disabilities, and other staff involved in VSAA events. Through field-testing, the questionnaire responses were analyzed and questions providing the most revealing data were identified. The questions were limited to ten and became what was called the generic questionnaire. This assessment tool was then made available to all VSAA events that included 1 to 3 all-day festivals and workshops for artists and teachers. Both the case studies and the responses to the generic questionnaire formed the basis for a comprehensive evaluation of VSAA programs. The study's hard data documented the overwhelming success of the VSAA programs.

I mention this project because it was one of the first to attempt to combine qualitative information with quantitative data to evaluate arts programs. The addition of questionnaire data gave us quantitative information to support our case study findings. Interestingly one kind of data supported the other and presented a picture of what was happening in the VSA festivals. Also, it provided valuable information requested by potential funders of VSAA programs (Anderson, 1991).

Study of the Effects of the Art For All Programs

In 2009 after being an observer of the July 5-day camp, I proposed a research study that included both quantifiable and qualitative approaches to document the effectiveness of the Art for All camps (Neuman, 2007). Such a study could benefit fundraising and showcase the importance of the arts for persons with disabilities.

Need to Relate Objectives to Research Methods

The research needs to begin with a perusal of the stated objectives for Art for All. After studying the four Art for All objectives cited earlier in this paper, objective two: "To raise the self-esteem of the underprivileged and the handicapped, and to help them achieve their full potential, and give their lives greater dignity." was the most promising.

There are a number of existing measures of self-esteem (Corcoran & Fisher, 2000). It is very important to be able to use at least one measure that has already been used in other studies to provide a context for the study being undertaken and to test the validity of the results beyond the responses of campers.

One must remember that the Art for All participants have disabilities that might prevent responding to a series of written questions. So, a scale would need to be brief and contain words that campers would understand. The use of pictures instead of words would also be very appropriate.

The Pictorial Thai Self-Esteem Scale (PTSS) (Phattharayuttawat, Ngamthipwatthana, and Pitiyawarnun, 2008) meets these criteria. The PTSS is a version of a self-esteem scale using images. The PTSS contains 20 items accompanied by pictures to explain each question and pictures to accompany the written response options.

It has been significantly correlated with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Corcoran & Fisher, 2000). The RSES has been used in more than 700 studies around the world. Naturally, the PTSS would need to be field-tested by persons with all disabilities before deciding the efficacy of its use (Dyer, 2006).

The second part of objective two would need to include definitions of “full potential” and “greater dignity.” Such definitions would have to include some measureable outcomes. For example, “greater dignity” might mean accumulating statements like, “I am so proud of my work!” or a parent might report, “My child smiled every time he saw his artwork displayed at home.” In other words, to get information to define “greater dignity,” one would have to imply it by the questions asked of campers and parents, both before and after an initial experience at an Art for All event (Sideman, 2006). Answers to questions can be counted if the answer options are either “yes” or “no”. Other responses to questions might be: “never”, “once or twice”, “most of the time” and “all the time”. Then, the response can be counted, so that one can get quantitative information from a questionnaire.

Along with specific questions that have specific response choices, longitudinal case studies of campers could be written. The case studies would include interviews of first-time campers, their parents, at least one Art for All volunteer that had worked with that specific camper. This group of campers should represent the four disabilities (persons with deafness, persons with blindness, persons with mental challenges, and persons with physical handicaps) and include participants without disabilities. The interviews would become the basis for case studies. The case studies could be shortened into brief vignettes of perhaps 500 words with pictures. A summary of the quantitative data gathered could be incorporated into a small booklet that could become an advocacy document for others including fundraisers. (Anderson, 1979) We did this in the VSAA quantitative and qualitative study. When we included summaries of the quantitative data gathered, the result was a short publication that was used to demonstrate the effectiveness of VSAA. It was the combination of hard data and the case studies that presented a fuller picture of what VSAA was about, and how important it would be to fund future VSAA events.

Hopefully several graduate students will consider engaging in such a research project. Undoubtedly, it would yield hard data and fascinating case studies supporting the effectiveness of an Art for All camp (Anderson, 2010). (The entire research proposal is available upon request.)

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Dialogic Performance:

Towards a Pedagogy of Transformance

Dan Baron Cohen* (Brazil)

Abstract

This article relates performance literacy to storytelling as a foundation for the making of democratic narratives and communities. It explains how the aesthetic potential of all public space is shaped by the relationship between historical memory and imagined communities, and how both affect the intimate dialogic performance of everyday life. From these foundations, the article argues for the decolonization of our internal dialogue through intercultural literacy to nurture participatory democracy and a new paradigm of education based on sustainable transformation and cooperation.

Keywords: *Education, Dialogic, Pedagogy, Transformation, Sustainability*

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Stage Presence

When I am asked in Brazil *where are you from?*, I pause for a fraction of a moment, before I answer. This question is asking more than just where I live. It is beginning the age-old process of identification on meeting to discover what we seem to have in common and whether our differences might threaten this community. It is interpreting whether we have any living histories or desires whose ‘chance’ meeting might unknowingly and even unintentionally provoke a dangerous confrontation in the space where we have crossed paths. For the histories or imagined futures that link nations, classes, genders, races and generations (and how their effects accumulate, overlap, confront, disperse and return) are lived or imagined by and through individuals and their communities in real places and through real everyday objects.

For this reason, no place (or object within it) is just made up of the three objective dimensions of its physical form. Its form also contains the two subjective and potentially dangerous dimensions of memory and imagination – their histories, and their imagined futures – that can be ‘seen’ in its spaces, surfaces and depths, depending upon who is interpreting their *presence*. It may well be that these histories and imagined futures have been recorded in physical objects, as in the circles carved into the stones by the Guarani Indians where they cooked, on the ocean coast where I am writing. But my *focused gaze* – my curiosity, my desire to see, the knowledges I bring to this interpretation and all that has shaped my receptivity – reveals the indigenous *presence* within the stone. This focused gaze – seeing, reflecting, interpreting – constitutes our transforming *aesthetic power*.

This *aesthetic power* is clearly always culturally shaped, but it is not just formed. It is *forming*. We can imagine, give form to something that is not real and real at the same time. The theatre, most obviously, is based and depends upon this *aesthetic power*, which transforms the real into fiction and the fictitious into the real. The more people who agree to focus their *aesthetic power* on the same space, the more powerful this collectively focussed space becomes. The Pataxo Indians strung the five bows in their monument to 500 years of resistance with invisible strings. Those who do not know this symbolism might read the *presence* of defeat in the bows. But those who look at the monument with the knowledge of its storytellers can not only read the *presence* of the invisible strings; through their *aesthetic power* they can transform the physical circle defined by the bows into an *aesthetic space* which in turn, depending on how it is focused, transforms anyone who walks onto it’s stage into warriors who ‘never reveal the secrets of their struggle’. Just by imagining the gaze of others, looking out and within simultaneously, people might step into this stage and transform their ‘performance’.

Intimate and Public Dialogue

In the fractional pause in our public dialogue, I read the eyes and ‘comportment’ of my questioner to interpret his¹ subjectivity, his *presence* and how he is reading mine, to decide how I will identify the two stories I inherited with my name, and

¹ I have chosen not to write his/her though I mean to refer to both men and women, to raise questions about the relationship between gender and performance in relation to public and intimate space.



The national monument: '500 Years of Resistance by the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil' a collective sculpture which provides an aesthetic space for the performance of history and transformation (Bahia, Brazil, 2001, 10m x 8m).

the story I am making. My intuition – that fusion of my emotional, corporal, perceptual and spatial intelligences – reads everything within this space we are now focusing through a dialogue between each other's *presence*, and guides the tone and strategy of my public voice – providing I trust it, can hear its intimate dialogue and act upon it.

People have always had to be this alert in moving between different communities, particularly communities with unresolved, dangerous living histories. But today, this is how we move through our own streets and, increasingly, through our own homes. It is how we survive the globalizing culture which is shattering entire continents, nations, classes, communities and families into isolated individual fortresses of fear. It is how we compete across and survive the physical, psychological and increasingly digitalized boundaries that separate those who eat and those who serve, those who work and those who beg, those who buy and those who make, those who kill and those who starve. Today, no matter where we are from, if we do not have this performance-sensitivity to the *dialogic* effects of our presence, we may well unintentionally provoke a fatal confrontation. This is the aesthetics of contemporary survival.

I smile and reply: *Wales. Canada. But now I live here in Brazil.* I offer an invitation to the question that crosses his eyes: *It's quite a story.* Most who have heard of Wales respond: *the United Kingdom* or *the land of Lady Di*, and I reply with another smile: *is Brazil part of the USA?* With a question, I've gently revealed my anti-imperialism and even proposed an empathetic bridge of solidarity. With the smile and the question I have invited further dialogue.

You might think this sensitivity to historical and imagined space, public and intimate voices and performance is over-stated, the over-cautious concern of a refugee or a prisoner with a past to hide or a future to protect, or the exaggerated self-consciousness of a stranger visiting a new country. Perhaps my sensitivity has been heightened a little by all of these experiences, as well as by my experience within the theatre. But I would argue this over-sensitivity is only making explicit what has become habitual, even deadened or lost in our everyday relations of dislocated and accelerated communication. This 'performance-sensitivity' or *presence*, however intuitive or professionalized, is what we identify in all the 'actors' we notice in our lives, those who assume a 'performative' role on a public stage. It is more commonly misunderstood in its negative form of shyness and over-sensitivity to 'being in public', a self-protective performance based on our direct or inherited memory of how the focused power of a public space (like the classroom, playground, street, workplace or even the *home*) was once abused. How much of this *performance sensitivity* is missed when we lower our eyes (in reflexes of self-defense)? We need to demystify theatre to understand and democratize the performance of power.

The Dialogic Triangle

Most Brazilians are curious to know about everyday life in Wales and London. They want to use this rare opportunity to find out about the food, the weather, the average wage, the men and women, corruption and the quality of life in Europe not just to check or extend their knowledge, but to see themselves and their world through my eyes. This is part of their own silent, intimate dialogue. As the stranger, I am expected to identify myself. Now I can return the question or ask about the community.

As soon as my question has left my lips, another fractional pause and set of silent intimate dialogues have been activated. Within seconds, we have inverted roles and I am learning about the person before me and about myself, and we are establishing not just a dialogue between two stories, but the possibility of a shared dialogic story in the future. This has been symbolized and facilitated through the transformation of the aesthetic space between us. We have already focused this space into an intercultural stage of reflection, interpretation and performance. It is now being reformed and adapted to include two different stories, two different kinds of performance, and two different kinds of interpretation and expectation.

Even though we have only exchanged a few words, in just one meeting we have transformed an existing space into a complex stage of simultaneous rehearsal, interactive performance, spectating and self-spectating. And through the way in which we use this space, we can quickly and profoundly sense and judge our equality or inequality. How we re-cognize this first relation depends upon how we understand the relationship between our stories. But in this first interactive drama of identification, we have both summoned up our pasts to imagine a series of possible futures to create a place of possible dialogue, community, decision-making and agreement – even if that agreement is that it should be our last! If this drama

of three interacting dialogues occurs between just two people, imagine the dialogic potential and activity of a space full of people!

Colonization: The Mutilation of Intimate Dialogue

But what if we have inherited lost or destroyed histories and have no ‘past’ to draw on, apply and share? What if we have inherited only fragmented, confused, contradictory or condemning colonial histories that engender self-doubt, self-disrespect, self-loathing and self-effacing self-representation? How can we build this drama of identification and community, or participate in its construction as equals? Without *knowing* ourselves, without understanding and decolonizing the histories that we carry within mindful-body – our language, our gestures and our corporal memory – our capacity to question and transform the racist and sexist reflexes in our everyday performances let alone to resist the seductive performance of consumerism, is radically weakened.



Trainee teachers ‘read’ themselves as performers of living history, through the mindful-body of the other, during a Transformance workshop (Pará, Brazil, 2007).



Community organizers dramatize thresholds they need to cross to work together (Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, 2001)

In the ten years I have lived in Brazil, I have been fascinated by certain national cultural reflexes. The non-verbal gesture of the *xicote hurry! hurry!* is intriguing. Is this the *presence* of internalized threat and subjugation from within centuries of colonialism? What are the subjective legacies of this culture? The word *saudade* is another fascinating national linguistic gesture. What are its origins? Does it carry the *presence* of acute memories of separation and loss of community: what are its subjective effects? What are the effects of the loss and (in some cases) the prohibition of the maternal tongue upon the capacity to speak, to write, to think self-confidently?

What is *present* in the cultural reflexes *fica a vontade, mas comer mais!* (as the visitor groans with the excess he has eaten), *mas e cedo ainda* (when the visitor looks ready to leave) and *desculpa qualquer coisa* (after offering faultless and excessive generosity)?

By contrast to the increasingly global, neo-liberal reflexes of privacy and isolation, these reflexes of expressive empathy reflect generations of poverty, humility and sharing present within the rural culture of solidarity. This is still the dominant 'structure of feeling' which, after centuries of repression and struggle, is now manifesting itself in Brazil's national cultural and educational policy. Given the country's living interculturalism (within the identity of almost every individual), it is impossible to know to what extent these cultural reflexes also reflect the nation's African and Indigenous pre-colonial cultures. But certainly, these qualities of empathy and intimacy are precious resources for cultivating and sustaining democratic community, and are deeply threatened by neoliberal policy and the micro-technology² and totalitarian culture of consumerism.

However, it is important to read these cultural reflexes critically and dialectically, to also see them as an unintentional performance of a more repressed Brazilian *presence*, the dramatized and overlapping historical experiences of the refugee, the slave and the hunted-in-hiding. These reflexes perform the deepest desire to be accepted and not be suspected, to avoid giving or taking offense, of saying no or disagreeing, which makes facing and solving difficulties with others almost impossible. Brazil may keep its conversation light and its party going so as not to risk discovering an intimate story that was deliberately hidden long ago. But the democratization of Brazil and its resistance to globalization are going to profoundly depend upon the development of a pluralistic, dialogic stage of self-esteem onto which its grandchildren born of rape and genocide can step without shame, onto which its black and mixed-race grandchildren can step without wishing they wore white skins, and onto which its white youth can step without having to laugh *I don't know* to the question *what is your history?*

Decolonization: The Rebuilding of Intimate Dialogue

Wales. Canada. But now I live here in Brazil. I have given my public response. But in spaces of proven solidarity, care, sensitivity and principle, I can tell my more intimate stories. I can speak of the cracked, torn and bleached photos of my great uncles and aunts from Poland who perished in the ovens of industrialized

² What are the subjective effects of the sustained consuming of unresponsive narratives that neither requires the telling or the exchanging of stories nor the active expression of listening and making of sense? The islands of communication are certainly producing new languages and critical intelligences. They must also be nurturing new skills in critical listening and reading. But are they nurturing a dialogic culture? Quite apart from the ideological and psycho-emotional effects of the predominantly Euro-American celebration of ruthless violence and invulnerability, is there any relation between the increase of violence in young people of all social classes and their hours and years of non-expressive monologic communication? It may still be premature to define the effects of the new technologies. But it is possible that even at their most interactive, their compulsive and monological qualities neither enable us to develop and practice our own *authority* nor allow the exchange of stories as metaphors in the process of making new collective and democratic stories.



Storytelling circles to perform the histories of 'intimate objects' from everyday life to develop dialogic authority and performance literacy: a pedagogy for intercultural education and transformation (Santa Catarina, Brazil, 2001)

destruction that left a thirst for justice and a silent cry for the right to remember in the names and gestures of those who witnessed from afar, that I inherited. And excavating even deeper still, I can tell the story of an early childhood that tiptoed round a profoundly disabled sister whose silent helplessness unknowingly formed her siblings into activists, scientists, doctors and artists of the emotions.

I resisted both stories for decades, for paradoxically different but ultimately identical psychological-emotional reasons. The larger racial story nurtured a deep respect and ache for human freedom, but in self-subjugating, self-ghettoizing and self-valorizing memory to thousands of years of persecution and resistance. My relationship to my sister more wordlessly nurtured emotional responsibility and care towards the helpless, at the expense of my personal needs. Both stories in the populist and careless mouth of the playground and empire post-war street corner became the means of mocking our Welsh and Canadian class difference. And because they were so intimately a part of my identity, both intimate stories found refuge behind the more public, more lucid, more detached and more masculine barricades of nationality and class.

I learned to tell these intimate stories through the courage of friends in Manchester, Derry, Rhondda, Palestine and Africa whose communities had also been ruthlessly and calculatedly denied the memory, language or right to know themselves. I could see in their eyes why they hid their intimate unspeakable stories of colonial self-hatred and violent inarticulate emotional and sexual self-pity behind proud and articulate anti-colonial street murals and anti-imperialist banners of protest. They could not bear the agony of being judged by their own for the cruel contradictions within their own compulsive subjectivity, and could not bear the torture of their own self-judgment. But gradually, during the years that we worked

together, their intimate stories inadvertently became metaphors for mine, and mine for their's. And we discovered a fascinating fact of performance: in learning to tell our intimate stories in public, we simultaneously had to hear and learn to tell them to ourselves. By breaking our silence in an intimate space of principled but empathetic solidarity where we could reflect analytically and creatively, not defensively and dogmatically about the politics of our subjectivity, we were able to find the voice and the courage to break our silence in a space of judgment.

As I learned to tell these intimate stories, I recognized why I had resisted them for so long. In part, they had denied me the right to create myself. But in part, they also associated me with Israeli imperial expansionism, the repression of the Palestinian people, and the helplessness inaction of victims. I refused to be judged for what I myself neither believed in nor accepted.

But I had also resisted these stories because I could not explain them to myself. I had no ideas which could explain in personal terms why we need to recognize what we ourselves have internalized within our *immunization* to know what needs to be transformed to avoid reproducing our oppressors within our own subjectivity. I had no access to the instruments which explain how victims of any holocaust can become tyrannical and ruthless human rights advocates, and illuminate our *structures of feeling* to convince us to actively choose to integrate this subjective dimension into the larger project of social transformation.

I had no grasp of what today I understand as the archeology of the mindful-body and the contradictions that lie on the threshold between resistance and self-determination. I therefore had no conscious awareness of how, in the struggle between my determined present and self-determined future, though I might 'need' to edit some of the facts of my history, their emotional and psychological force continued to structure my feelings, gestures and needs, and necessarily touched and influenced the lives and struggles of others. This is not a fault but a subjective and political fact of my personal humanity. As a community-based 'performing arts educator', I have a responsibility both to re-cognize the motivational power of my humanity and understand its 'performance effects'.

This intimate history is not the declared subject of this article. But it is clearly a part of its subjectivity and, more profoundly, by sharing this intimate story with you, I not only re-cognize and know myself as a writer, lover, son, friend, educator and elected President of IDEA on the various collective stages within my life; it is how I recognize myself as an inter-acting subjectivity on the collective stages of others and my only hope of learning the skills and praxis of a new community-based subjectivity.

At this time of writing, this is how I explain what *motivates* and *animates* my ideas and reflexive-empathetic solidarity with any person or people struggling to tell their story to create a new identity. But it also explains my commitment to illuminating the subjective effects of not knowing or denying this intimate history, and to understanding their significance in the quest for democracy and self-determination.

The emotional and psychological illnesses ‘caused’ by amnesia, cultural dislocation, lack of self-confidence, lack of self-esteem, lack of self-knowledge and lack of self-acceptance not only denies the possibility of interrupting the desire for affirmation that dialectically locks victim and violator into the abusive co-dependent cycle that characterizes all authoritarian relationships; it also explains the disability to say no, the justice-seeking desire for the center of the stage, the (consequent) tendency to assume excessive responsibility, the (consequent) disability to organize time, the relentless cry of (self)accusation and consequent inability to listen, and the chronic disability to perceive how the personal is present in their (and every) reading of the world which characterizes all victim cultures. Of course, inexperience in coordinating time and responsibility, and (impoverished) resources exacerbate these difficulties. But these factors tend to be turned into the key causes by victim cultures to rationalize and disown responsibility for their deaf and compulsive performance practice, an understandable but tell-tale reflex to blame rather than to re-cognize the intolerable possibility of complicity in any continuing suffering. This is the fundamental link between storytelling and self-determination. I often ask myself when I am most acutely uncertain how to read a culture that is not my own, or any individual I am working with *do I as an ‘outsider’ have any right to participate in other people’s struggles?* This uncertainty is no less present in my ‘own culture’ or ‘community’. We are all outsiders to others. But the question is fundamental. It is what inhibits any authoritarian desire to ‘conscientious-ize’ others and generates the necessary self-doubt and need to question that ensures permanent questioning and learning.

From Storytelling to Storymaking

If our capacity to narrate and tell stories arises from our need to organize and make sense of our experience in the world, how we narrate and tell our story of course depends on who we are, where we belong and the stories that we hear or do not hear. It does not follow that we know how to tell our story, that we know when and where it begins, or that we tell it in a way which satisfies our need. Perhaps that explains the compulsive fascination in so many people to hear other stories. But however we tell our story – whether we have to borrow the nerve or techniques of other storytellers to tell it, whether we have to smuggle it into another time and place to tell it, whether we have to tell it in the margins or the silences of other people’s stories, whether we have to conceal it within other people’s narratives or even between the teeth in their smile, whether we have to lie and cheat to tell it or bend it almost beyond recognition to match it with the world – tell it we must, at least to ourselves. For storytelling is how we try to know and recognize ourselves.

We could say storytelling is the way the world’s history is revealed in our actions, or that our intimate stories enable us to clarify our part and responsibility in the shared histories we are making. We could say storytelling is the act of closing one story to enable another to begin, or the act of maintaining a story as open and incomplete to extend it into the future. However we choose to see and define it, storytelling is much more than the mere telling of stories. It is an intervention in

a shared living history that contributes to the definition of the present and the making of the future, and explains why storytelling and the control of its story making power – its means of affecting and defining – are so fiercely contested and controlled. If storytelling is this act of ‘making sense’ through the making of a story for the first time or making it differently from the last time, why is it not recognized as story making? Is this to persuade us that we are mere tellers or listeners and should subordinate ourselves to and invest ourselves in the recognized makers of stories?

For this reason, we need to ensure that the dialogic power of ‘storying’ and how it is performed become an essential part of our human sensitivity and understanding of democracy. We should judge ourselves – and our cultural and educational institutions – by the extent to which we shared and nurture the dialogic skills of performance, in practice.

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Dance House:

European Models of Folk Music and Dance Revival in Urban Settings

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Abstract

At its inception in Hungary in the 1970s, the gatherings of young urban musicians at which they performed rural dance music for urban audiences had clearly political connotations. These gatherings, named Dance House or “Táncház” in Hungarian, were meant to be an alternative to the Soviet-style choreographed stage presentations of “folklore”. As the model spread to other European countries, the political overtones became either different or irrelevant as the gatherings became largely recognized as both learning and entertaining events for urbanites. This presentation first contextualizes the appearance of the Dance House in the words of some of its creators and practitioners. This is followed by an analytical overview of Dance House gatherings in various parts of Europe. The central part of the presentation provides a detailed examination of the application of the Hungarian model in Slovenia. Based on multifarious experiences with Dance House in Slovenia and other European countries, the paper ends up with suggestions on possible applications of this model and its variants in worldwide contexts.

Keywords: *Táncház, Cultural, Society, Folk, Slovenia, Urban Revival, Edutainment*

Folk Music in European Settings

Following the views of the influential German philosopher Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803), many urban intellectuals throughout Europe accepted the notion that the soul of each national group lives in traditional forms of expression of its rural population.¹ Folk music, and within this category folk songs in particular (due to presence of national language), received major attention. The nineteenth century was strongly marked by the two mutually interwoven agendas: political movements towards national emancipation and the artistic movement named the Romanticism. “The national past became a subject of intense historical investigation, and there was new enthusiasm for folk songs, dances, legends, and fairy tales” (Kamien 1988: 353). European composers of art music were preoccupied by the idea of creating nationally relevant expressions by using language, as well as traditional melodies, rhythms, movements, costumes, customs, specific natural and cultural milieus, myths and historical topics, related to their own national groups.²

Collecting folk songs from own rural people became a respected activity in the perceptions of the urban elites. The top-to-bottom project *Das Volkslied in Österreich* (Folk Song in Austria), initiated in 1904, encouraged the collecting activity of several national committees and paralleled several ongoing grassroots activities of individuals and societies. In most cases, folk song collecting remained in the domain of urban nationally minded people, who gradually gave rise to the scholarly branch that during the 20th century became known as folk music research and eventually resulted in representative collections of folk songs in many European nation states.³ Characteristic modern examples include the *Corpus Musicae Popularis Hungaricae* in Hungary and *Slovenske ljudske pesmi* in Slovenia, both being scholarly editions in several volumes, and related to the respective national academies of science. The work of Béla Bartók (1881-1945) and Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) in Hungary, and Karel Štrekelj (1859-1912) and France Marolt (1891-1951) in Slovenia thus have lines of continuity to our days within the realms of what ethnomusicologist John Morgan O’Connell calls “national ethnomusicologies.”⁴

State Folklore vs. Folk Music Revival

During most of the second, half of the twentieth century Europe was divided along the Cold War line. Political separation of “eastern” and “western” Europe was reflected in the competing ideological and economic systems (communism vs. capitalism), supported by the mutually confronted military blocs (Warsaw Alliance vs. NATO).⁵

¹ Among Herder’s most often quoted works in this context are *Stimmen der Völker in ihren Liedern* (Voices of the Peoples in their Songs, 1773) and later *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern* (The Voices of Peoples in Songs, 1778-1779).

² “Bedřich Smetana’s *The Bartered Bride* (Prodaná nevěsta 1866) provides a clear example of national opera, further representing what we might call a peasant opera, in which the Czechness of the work lies in the peasant world portrayed by the people of the nation, even before they are themselves ‘national’” (Bohlman 2004: 83).

³ Interesting to note, the world’s major association of ethnomusicologists, the *International Council for Traditional Music* (ICTM), was formed in 1949 by folk music researchers and named *International Folk Music Council*.

⁴ “National ethnomusicologies” was the theme of a plenary panel put together by O’Connell for the 39th world conference of ICTM in Vienna, Austria, in 2007.

⁵ Greece and Turkey, located in the Eastern half of Europe, were part of the “western” alliance. Countries such as Switzerland and Austria, though widely recognized as “western” claimed “neutral” status in military terms. Yugoslavia was founding member and the only representative of “non-aligned” countries in Europe. Non-alignment was a useful alternative for most countries in Asia, Africa, and South America to avoid the confrontational view of the world suggested by the two blocs.

Interest in folk music was present in both “eastern” and “western” contexts, but the approaches, aims and results showed significant differences. The dominant “eastern” model was based on state-supported folklore ensembles with heavily choreographed performances in folk costumes, adapted for a staged show. In contrast, the model that can be named “western” was based on young urban intellectuals, participants in the folk music revival movement, not interested in choreographies and costumes, and sometimes even not in the staged performance as the ultimate aim. In both cases, their motivations varied in a range from artistic experimenting to national idealism and in both cases the existing folk song collections and sometimes even own field research served as sources for new creations.

State folklore ensembles followed the logic “National in form, socialist in content” with their principal notion coming from the Soviet Union rather than from the respective countries. The most representative ones among them were established in cities and not in villages, “their choirs, orchestras, and repertoires fused West European performative structures, compositional techniques, and standards of professionalism (...) with aspects of village lore, to create hybridic forms that typified socialist modernity ...” (Buchanan 2006: 82-83, based on her research in Bulgaria). In contrast to this model, in which everything was strictly determined, from music and dance arrangements to performance features such as the number and physical appearance of dancers (their unified physical measures, costumes, even smiles on their faces), the “western” model was offering a more relaxed, spontaneous, and varied approaches to rural music. Opinions expressed by members of two revival ensembles, the first one from the northwestern end of what was Yugoslavia and the second from Austria, makes good examples. “The ensemble Istranova attempts in its own way to bring traditional Istrian music closer to a contemporary listener. Its main goal is neither a static reproduction of folk song as of a deceased fact nor the exotic folklorism escaping from reality” (Istranova 1982, sleeve note).⁶ In words of the Austrian ensemble Urfahrner Aufgeiger, “We do not play traditional music to cultivate tradition, but because it is the music of spirit, intelligence, and emotional impact” (Pettan 1996, sleeve note).

Tanchaz in Hungary

At its inception in Hungary in the 1970s, the gatherings of young urban musicians at which they performed rural songs and dance music for urban audiences had clearly political connotations. Hungary, located in central Europe, was then part of the “eastern,” Soviet-dominated political, and military bloc, very much against the will of most of its population.⁷ “With the aim of mastering and keeping alive authentic folk music, young urban musicians – beginning with Béla Halmos and Ferenc Sebő – followed in the footsteps of Bartók and Kodály by going to rural areas of Hungary and to Hungarian villages (...) of Transylvania in Romania. A movement developed, bands were formed and folk dancing halls were established

⁶ *Istranova* specialised in the repertoire of its own culturally distinctive region called Istra (Istria).

⁷ Hungarians’ anti-Soviet protests in 1956 were brutally crushed by the Soviet army.

where urban young people and their children could learn the music and dances of their ancestors (...) and dances to live music” (Szönyei and Lévai 2005: 29-30). These folk music and dance gatherings, named *tánc ház* (“dance house”), were widely understood as an alternative to Soviet-style choreographed stage presentations of folklore, both in national and presentational terms.⁸

The *tánc ház* concept celebrated and continues to celebrate spontaneity, flexibility, inclusiveness, and improvisation. Its sessions were organized not as preparations for staged performances, but as educational and entertaining events, in which practitioners were strengthening their national awareness by learning Hungarian folk songs, instrumental tunes, and functional dance steps through their practical and voluntary involvement. Nobody was subjected to judgments according to age, measures of the body, or physical abilities.

As the model spread to other European countries, political overtones became either different or irrelevant. Especially in the western European countries, in which Soviet politics, ideology, and the earlier described approach to folklore were not present; the gatherings became largely recognized as a fashionable urban way to learn and enjoy rural music, or in short as edutainment.⁹ Names for this type of gatherings often reflected the Hungarian origin: in Northern European countries they became known as *Danshuis*, in Germany *Tanzhaus*, in England *Dancehouse*, in Slovenia *Plesna hiša*, which is the literal translation of the original Hungarian name. In the countries outside the Soviet sphere of domination, the gatherings were linked to contemporary folk music scene (folk music revival) and included in multicultural festivals (such as e.g. Falun) and camps for young musicians (such as Ethno, both in Sweden).

Plesna Hiša in Slovenia

Introduction of the *tánc ház* in Slovenia took place surprisingly late, bearing in mind that Hungary and Slovenia are neighboring countries. During the Cold War, Slovenia was one of the republics of the Europe’s only non-aligned country – the multinational Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Balancing between East and West, Warsaw Alliance, and NATO, Yugoslavia was encouraging and financially supporting folklore ensembles, which in turn were somewhat less rigidly subject to popular Soviet-model canons. Folk music revival, on the other hand, although present thanks to a few soloists and ensembles from the early 1980s, became widely recognized from the mid 1990s, following the independence of Slovenia in 1991. Its presence is linked to the activities of the Cultural Society Folk Slovenia, established in 1996 by folk music performers and researchers. The presentation that follows is theoretically framed within the six classical research approaches, as the American ethnomusicologist Mantle Hood named them, ranging from descriptive, historical, analytical, comparative, and critical, to a synthesis.

⁸ Soviet-style “manufactured folklore presented as if it were genuinely traditional” is sometimes named *fakelore* (term coined by Richard M. Dorson in 1950).

⁹ Edutainment is a coined term that brings together the notions of education and entertainment.

1. *Descriptive*

Cultural Society Folk Slovenia (CSFS) was established as an independent, voluntary, and non-profit association of citizens, who through their work wish to satisfy their interests in the cultural realm and thus contributes to the enrichment of cultural life in their immediate and broader environment (Constitution, art. 1).

Its goals were defined as:

- Connecting performers of folk music and assisting their quantitative and qualitative development
- Promoting the use of folk sources and instruments in musical life
- Educating
- Collecting sound and other materials for a permanent archive
- Publishing
- Organizing cultural events
- Cooperating with societies of Slovenes outside of the Republic of Slovenia
- Cooperating with societies and institutions at home and abroad
- Informing the public about activities

CSFS currently consists of about 70 members from various parts of Slovenia. Most of them publicly perform Slovene folk music and dance. Several members are professionally associated with universities, research institutes, museums, or media. The society organizes concerts, lectures, panels and workshops in singing, playing instruments, and dancing. Nearly a month ago, the society added the word ethnomusicology to its name, which after long negotiations opened the way to more ethnography-based approaches and increase in membership.

2. *Historical*

According to a 1984 survey of musicians linked to *táncház* in Hungary, a typical ensemble consisted of “three to six members, mostly male, age twenty to thirty-five years old, playing older traditional dance melodies on the folk instruments of Hungary and Transylvania (violins, bagpipes, hurdy-gurdies, flutes), all of which they learned through records, cassettes, videos, informal courses, and occasionally by serving as apprentices to famous village musicians” (Ronström and Malm 2000: 153). As the dance house model moved to Western Europe, the key-terms such as hybridity, modernity, and syncretism became more and more emphasized.

And how is it in Slovenia? Members of the CSFS agreed about adopting a “responsible,” though more flexible attitude towards folk music and dance compared to folklore ensembles, whose approaches are partly rooted in the earlier described “eastern” model. General characteristics from the survey on Hungary are comparable with the Slovenian experience, of course with Slovene music and musical instruments. Dance house events in Slovenia never include choreographies and folk costumes, and are open to general audiences. Since the year 2000, when the first Slovene dance house took place in the capital Ljubljana, the gatherings take place in various localities and at various occasions throughout Slovenia.

3. Analytical

An analysis should consider three categories of participants: musicians, dance instructors, and dancers. Music is provided either by one of the bands within the CSFS or by an ad-hoc group of instrumentalists. Dance instructors – usually two, based on the fact that most of Slovene dances belong to the category of couple dances - are experienced dancers, who are also involved in research and education. It was expected that the dancers will by far count to the most heterogeneous category compared to musicians and dance instructors, but soon we noticed two basic groups: former or current members of folklore ensembles and university students. The former accepted dance house as an opportunity to broaden their experiences in a free manner, while the later perceive it as a practical addition to their classes in ethnomusicology. The individuals outside these two categories are diverse, though not numerous. Their motives for attending dance houses are social and educational.

4. Comparative

I was in a position to compare Slovene dance house with dance houses in several other countries, but on this occasion I shall limit myself to the single, most relevant comparison that with the Hungarian *táncház*. My fieldwork in the Hungarian capital Budapest in 2004 revealed that there are at least two *táncház*es available daily, so the frequency of the gatherings was much higher in comparison with Slovenian ones. The results of my fieldwork confirmed that Hungarian *táncház* still, several decades after its inception, uses dance instructors and that dancers do not simply dance for the sake of their pleasure. In other words, the educational part of edutainment remains a vital aspect of the event. Yet, another important fact is that *táncház* in Hungary is not restricted to Hungarian music and dance in the ethnic sense. There may be evenings dedicated to a specific other culture or to several cultures. There are also *táncház*es specialized in Greek, South-Slav or Klezmer repertoires. Some feature programs aimed at specific age groups, such as children (Hoppál 2002: 124-126).

5. Critical

At the time of my first mandate as president of the CSFS in 2001, I expressed wish for inclusion of those individuals and ensembles that perform non-Slovene repertoires, but was outnumbered within the Executive Board. The “nationally conscious” majority suggested that The Others should establish their own society, if they wish, so my vision of the CSFS as a meeting point of various traditions, whose carriers are Slovene citizens of various ethnic origins and affinities had to wait for almost a decade. My current, second mandate, is marked by the new openness towards the Others.

6. Synthesis

The well-grounded opinion of researchers that diversity counts to the most important characteristics of Slovene folk music and dance (Kumer 1981: 250) is

seemingly at odds with domination of two dance patterns – those of polka and valse, which are generated by the trans-Alpine folk-pop music. CSFS intended to contribute to affirmation of the diversity of dance patterns from its inception and continues to be successful in this direction. The initial concept of Slovene dance houses was regional (e.g. dances from northern Slovenia) or focused on a selected local area. Other criteria (e.g. related dance features – couple dances, communal round dances, etc.) were introduced later.

Conclusion

Dance house became accepted in Slovenia as a specific urban phenomenon related to folk music revival, also either as an alternative to or as a more natural and relaxed extension of activities practiced by folklore ensembles. Clearly, its goal is neither the simple transfer of village lore to the city environment nor the adoption of dance choreographies for the sake of stage performances in folk costumes, but the adoption of functional dance steps and other related skills that enable their application in real-life situations, such as weddings, and other social gatherings with music and dance. With this intention in mind, a typical dance house gathering is structured in a way that learning of the steps and figures based on the imitation of dance instructors is followed by the checking of the learned contents in a sense “Once you hear music, relate it to the appropriated dance skills.”

Dance house in Slovenia already became recognized as a representative item in a variety of situations calling for cultural exchange across national borders, as well. The two pictures at the end of this article document two such situations. The former is related to the ICTM’s Executive Board meeting in Ljubljana in 2006. The Board member Tran Quang Hai presented the Slovene hosts with the workshop in harmonic singing; in return, the guests received Slovene dance house workshop. The later photograph is related to cultural exchange project between the Bangkok-based Chulalongkorn University and the University of Ljubljana in 2008. Slovene dance house took place following the Thai guests’ presentation of their Ram Wong.

This promising model that already proved successful in several European contexts has potential to serve other important, so far not addressed purposes, such as bringing closer together people of different backgrounds within national borders, serving as a tool in gathering together around various ecological and social issues, and contributing to peace-promoting and reconciliatory circumstances in today’s world.



Plesna hiša for the participants of the first meeting of the ICTM STG Applied Ethnomusicology, Ljubljana © Svanibor Pettan 2008



Plesna hiša as a case of cooperation between Slovene and Thai students - Thai Ram Wong dance, Ljubljana © Svanibor Pettan 2007

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Music and Well-being in the City – Developing Urban Health Care in Asia

- **Beyond Entertainment - Music and Health Care
in Urban Parks**
Bussakorn Binson (Thailand)
- **Community Music Therapy in Action - Healing
Through Pirit Chanting in Sri Lanka**
Lasanthi Manaranjanie Kalinga Dona (Sri Lanka)

Beyond Entertainment:

Music and Healthcare in Urban Parks

Bussakorn Binson⁺ (Thailand)

Abstract

This study is a recent review of the use of music for healthcare in urban parks in five districts of Bangkok, Thailand. It was found that music played a central role in many activities supportive of physical and mental health. This paper will discuss the role of music in supporting the health of Bangkok's residents through its use in a variety of public park programs. Some examples are group aerobics, yoga and various genres of dance. The research found that although these activities are well attended and beneficial to health, there is a lack of unified, supportive policies for them. Interviews were conducted on three levels: facility managers and coordinators, group instructors, and participants who uniformly expressed the importance of the role of government for these programs' sustainability and growth.

Keywords: *Music and Healthcare, Music and Recreation*

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Introduction

Music is an art form consisting of sequences and pattern of sounds. Throughout history music has been man's companion in his celebrations, free time and life's transitions. It can mirror or change one's emotions. More recently, it has been found to be a beneficial tool for the improvement of man's health. Healthcare is the prevention, treatment, and management of illness, and the preservation of mental and physical well-being through the services offered by the medical and allied health professions¹.

The role of music in healthcare is one of interaction and involvement comprised of melody, lyrics and rhythm, which can occupy the mind and lead it away from pain into peacefulness. Especially rhythms can motivate human movement in those that tend to be sedentary and provide an internal vacation from depressing thoughts, ruminations, and worries. Playing and creating music significantly increases the involvement factor, and thereby the therapeutic effects, over passive listening.

Music for Healthcare is the use of music to maintain and improve conditions of health. Nowadays, people are fully able to manage musical resources that are available to them to improve their health. The objectives of this research are to explore the current of music and healthcare activities in urban parks (Thonburi site), as well as to propose potential music and healthcare projects to the Bangkok administrative committee and Governors aimed at promoting the health of the urban community.

Music and healthcare activities

Music and healthcare activities can be found in six parks of the Thonburi area as indicated:



Aerial view of the six parks in Thonburi ©2010 Google - ©2010 Imagery TerraMetrics

¹ The American Heritage® Medical Dictionary

- A. *Thonburirom Park, Tung Kru District*
- B. *Somdej Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajonani Park, Bang Khuntien District*
- C. *Tawee Wattanarom Park, Tawee Wattana District*
- D. *72nd Year Celebration to His Majesty the King Park, Thonburi side of the Rat Burana District*
- E. *Rama 8 Royal Park, Bang Plud District*
- F. *Chalerm Prakiat Jungle Park, Tawee Wattana District*

A. Thonburirom Park, Tung Kru District

Thonburirom is a very large park, situated in a suburban setting. It is off the Buddha Bhujra road in the Tung Kru District. It has three roads (Pracha Utit, Rama2, and Buddha Bhujato) connecting it to the community, which makes it very convenient for the surrounding population.

It is Bangkok's official policy to make the place into a "city park of health" for the residences of Thonburi. There is a "Thonburirom healthy sport area," which is a 300-meter long jogging path with 12 different exercise stations. Each station works a different muscle group of the body.

It was found that there are two main musical activities in this park. One is aerobics, and the other is Taiji dance. The local residents initiated these programs themselves so consequently, the budget for the instructors varied for each area. The aerobic dance activities gather many participants that can be divided into two types the permanent and the temporary. The permanent groups have a regular weekly schedule, i.e., every workday evening or every Saturday morning, whereas the temporary ones do not.

The permanent groups are led by a president and a committee that handles the administration of the budget, which supports the instructor's compensation. Additionally, they make the necessary arrangements for the required sound equipment and power connections. They work with the park staff to ensure that the location in the park is suitable and well maintained for their programs along with it being beautifully landscaped and conducive to welcoming their group.

Taiji dance is quite a contrast to aerobic dance. It is practiced by a small number of members and due to its Chinese tradition it has to be practiced every morning. It is held at the corner of Thonburirom Park. The instructor or trainer is usually a highly skilled senior member of the group that has turned professional.

B. The 72nd Year Celebration for His Majesty the King Park (Thonburi side), Rat Burana District

The 72nd Year Celebration for His Majesty the King Park is off the Rat Burana road, under the Rama 9 Bridge. This is a very unique and rare waterfront park for Bangkok as it is situated along the bank of the Chao Praya River. It is divided into two by the river that is, there is both a Phra Nakorn District and a Thonburi District side to the park.

Consequently, it has spectacular riverside scenery and is designed for relaxing and balancing the mind in this area that has a peaceful nature. It is an outstanding and very popular place with dual policy objectives of supporting both sports and relaxation.

In the evenings, a diverse group from a range of professions goes to exercise there. The park provides a range of recreational facilities along with the Rama 9 Bridge Youth Center and its many facilities and sport equipment available.

In this park, three different activities in terms of music for health were found. These were aerobics, sport dance, and Wann Taikong. Aerobics and sport dance are organized under the Rama 9 Bridge Youth Center in terms of trainers and expenses for equipment. People who are interested in these activities have to apply to the center for yearly membership. They can then use all of the equipment available and can attend all activities.

On the other hand, Wann Taikong is a smaller scale activity of the Chinese community. There is an instructor teaching this dance to members. Wann Taikong is considered a mixture of Taiji dance and yoga. The songs are interspersed with Chinese prose during portions of the dance. The Wann Taikong club has requested location support from Rama 9 Bridge Youth Center so that its members do not need to sign up for youth center membership.

C. Tawee Wattanarom Park, Tawee Wattana District

Tawee Wattanarom is a medium-sized, multi-purposed park off of the canal-sided Tawee Wattana road with a market fair in the same area. There is a marked park path for health that includes ten exercise equipment stations with a racetrack and playground. The sport fields, basketball court, and artwork spaces are situated amid large trees and flowering plants. The park has been beautifully choreographed and decorated with a sense for nature as directed by the “10 Nice Parks, 10 Clear Canals, and 10 Clean Roads project.” This park has been designed to be part of the grounds of a second Grand Palace.

This park is considered as the second big park on the Thonburi side. The main function of parks in Bangkok is to create an environment conducive to relaxation and to provide a space for various activities. However, there is no music for health activities found in Tawee Wanarom Park proper, as it is close to the Tawee Wattana Youth Center, which hosts many activities there. Its many members participate in aerobics, sport dance, modern dance and Thai dance.

D. Chalerm Prakiat Jungle Park, Tawee Wattana District

Chalerm Prakiat Jungle Park is situated off the intersection of Buddhamonthon No. 2 road with Pra Boromraj Chonanee. The park was created in cooperation by the Department of Highways with the Ministry of the Interior. Their goal was to beautify and convert the area under the highway into a usable community park.

The place has been used as multi-purpose area that hosts many sport activities, festivals, and celebrations.

In terms of music for health activities, it was found that this park hosted aerobics and baton dance. The aerobics are conducted by a club and its permanent membership on a fixed daily schedule. The president of the club administers the trainer's fee and equipment. Its budget is made up of membership fees and an allocation from the district office. The president is responsible for obtaining the location permit and the trainer to ensure its long-term viability. In contrast, the baton dance club is much smaller with no fixed schedule.

E. Rama 8 Royal Park, Bang Plud District

Rama 8 Royal Park is a Chao Phraya riverside park, under the Rama 8 Bridge. The park was recently founded for the installation of a statue of His Majesty the King Rama 8. This riverside area of greenery has been zoned for recreation and exercising. To date there has not been an official opening ceremony.

Taiji dance is the only music and health activity in the park hosted by a small community club. In the past, they utilized an activity field under the bridge, and with the development of the park they requested a user permit, as Taiji dance needs a morning space with fresh air. Its trainer is a volunteer member of the club supported by the membership, as there is none from the district.

F. Somdej Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani Park, Bang Khuntien District

Somdej Phra Srinagarindra Boromarajajonani Park is a small park off Rama 2's Soi 69. It was created to serve the local residents. In front, the park has a pond with adjacent lawns for people to relax. The special feature of the park is its youth library for book lovers. Like some other parks mentioned, there is no music for health activity in the park proper, because of its proximity to a formal youth center where recreation activities are hosted. Residents who are interested in the activities have to apply for membership at the Bang Khuntien Youth Center before they can participate. This center offers aerobics, sport dance, and Thai dance.

The study shows that the activities related to music and healthcare found within six parks are: aerobics, Taiji, dance and yoga. However, only for a few of these programs parks received budgetary support from their district office while most others suffer from an emphasis on subsidizing sport fields. Currently, the sport fields have dedicated an annual budget specific to their needs, whereas the music and healthcare programs must come out of a very contentious general fund.

The number of the sport fields in each district is: 24 fields in Tung kru, 22 fields in Ratburana, 21 fields in Bang Plud, 20 fields in Tawee Wattana, and 42 fields in Bang Khuntien. Additionally, some parks have no music in the park programs because of the existing youth centers at the same location or nearby that offer similar activities. Some of the activities at these centers that incorporate a musical element

are aerobics for health, Wann Taikong, dancing such as Thai traditional dance and international dance genres, such as Ballroom, Jazz, and Hip-hop. There are also Thai instrumental musical groups featuring the percussion and fiddle as well as international instrumental musical groups featuring the guitar and keyboard.

The survey of music and healthcare programs indicates that music and healthcare activities are supported by many local clubs and their members. They are furthermore assisted by the club's chairpersons who efficiently administer and coordinate all the required facilities such as amplifiers, speakers, stage and the budget that pays for the activity's specialist or instructor. The club's members themselves constitute most of these programs' participants and directly provide the operating budget along with ideas for further development.

Policies

Bangkok's Culture, Sports, and Tourism Department is responsible for the policy making related to music and healthcare. In an interview with Mr. Somsak Chantawattana, the Department Director he stated that as of yet, there is not a solid profile in place regarding the role of music for health in the parks. There is currently; however, a project known as "Music in the Park" which is primarily a relaxing cultural entertainment activity so that the residences of Bangkok can enjoy the (sharing of) musical activities and concerts in their parks.

Bangkok's Administration is attentive to finding ways to support its people and specifically the health of its youths by establishing youth centers in each district. At these centers, the Sports Department has been instilled with the authority to establish recreational activities and policies according to the following numbered strategies for the 2009 - 2012 time frames:

- Strategy number 4 of Bangkok's Administration plan is to pursue and continue to develop the highest possible quality of life while maintaining Bangkok's unique cultural identity.
- Strategy number 4.2 delegates the responsibility for developing the range of sport activities to the Department of Culture, Sports, and Tourism.
- Strategy number 4.6 specifying the strategy for the maintenance and development of Bangkok's charismatic cultural identity is again under the jurisdiction of the Culture, Sports, and Tourism Department that forged the "Music in the Park" programs

Additionally, the executive directors of the districts, operating executives of the youth centers, and the staff of the Community Development and Welfare Department, have all been interviewed about the park's music policy. Mr. Sapon Potisop, the Director of Bang Khuntien District, Mr. Songchai Payomyam, the Vice Director of Taweewattana District, and Mrs. Kanungnij Trachuwanich, the Vice Director of Bang Plad District expressed the same conclusion in that there is currently no unified policy guiding the

use of music in the district's parks or sport fields. They showed particular interest in how a written policy could be translated into real programs for the community.

Furthermore, they state this is because each district office functions under the administrative umbrella of the Bangkok administration that does not have a policy governing the beneficial use of music in the community. Consequently, the main Bangkok administration has no solid plan for music activities, while the yearly financial plan to promote sports and recreation is determined by each district locally.

Moreover, Miss Patamanan Thanapompradit, the operations executive of two youth centers and community officer with Mrs. Supojanee Bannaraj, the community officer of the Tung Kru District reported during the interviews that there is no tangible plan for supporting music for health in Bangkok's urban parks. They attribute this deficit to the lack of discretionary funds in the current budget.

In addition, they noted that people in the community created their own activity clubs based on mutual interests. Primarily these would be sports related groups that mirror the preferences in the area. For example, grass-root groups of aerobic dance, football, running, and Taiji dance were mentioned.

Furthermore, the participating club members would themselves furnish activity related supportive equipment if needed. The amount of money participants would contribute was negotiated at the group level with no involvement from the district directors.

It was clearly expressed that the sport and recreation policy had been developed specifically to address the focus of its youth centers, since the Bangkok administration places an emphasis on developing the abilities of youths in sports. Consequently, there is much support and efforts applied for the promotion of the youth center activities.

Budget

The core problem regarding budget is that the top management level does not have additional discretionary funds and the district funds are already slated for existing sports programs at the youth centers. So although there are available sports fields and the community has expressed strong interest from the middle aged and the early retirement groups, there is no top down allocations available for payment of instructors and leaders/instructors as well as for portable sound systems.

Conclusion

There are five main obstacles or problems that have arisen in response to the Music in the Park campaign as follows below:

1. There is a lack of sufficient governmental staff to support additional activities. Even the management and coordination of volunteer leaders/instructors is lacking.
2. There are severe budget problems, which mean that Bangkok does not have sufficient funds to promote and support its existing sport and recreation activities. Therefore, a solid permanent plan cannot be drafted to include additional music related activities. This in turn places additional financial burden on the volunteer programs and the participant community.
3. The facilities in the activity are still lacking. That is, the district offices cannot provide the volunteer instructors/leaders with an accessible power source, sound system, small raised presentation platforms or a clean flat area to host large groups such as aerobics
4. There are restrictions on the access to some parks and sport field locations. That is, most parks are only open from 05.00 to 21.00.
5. There are also unnecessary management restrictions. The districts' local offices have no authority to host a "Music in the Park" event since that is under control of the Executive Director of Bangkok. Furthermore, volunteer community activities are restricted by a permit system and some sports fields have time of day restrictions as well. Some cannot host activities during the day due to an adjacent school restriction for preserving quiet study time. Then others have no lighting for nighttime activities.

Discussion

All the district executives and administrators of the parks and recreation sectors agree that the government should provide additional budget to promote music and exercise activities. These efforts should not only apply to the youth centers, but also to the public sports fields where there are accessible central spaces available.

Since these latter places are scattered throughout the residential areas, it is quite convenient for the nearby residents. If the government had the supportive policies and provides sufficient budget to match the public's demand, it will be beneficial for the health of people. It is also noted that the government should improve and develop the public spaces to better meet the needs of musical activities. One key factor would be readily available power outlets for sound systems as well as providing spacing and sound level guidelines to avoid sound pollution or crosstalk from adjacent activities.

Due to the desire of the citizens for their government to increase the support and the promotion of musical programs, the governmental staff should conduct a survey in the activity areas so that they gain the community based input to learn more about the problems and desires of the community. This will result in improved future programs. The sport and recreation policy should incorporate periodic community input forums that result in a cooperative management and development model. This would lead to greater satisfaction of community members through a higher level of involvement in lieu of the existing top-down model. The Executive Director of Bangkok should standardize its support for music in health programs across all its districts.

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Community Music Therapy in Action:

Healing Through Pirit Chanting in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Pirit is an important Buddhist ceremony with healing aims in Sri Lanka. Centered on chanting provided by monks, this communal event can take place in a variety of environments and remains open to everyone. This article provides an insight into the history of pirit, and its aims and functions in contemporary circumstances. It discusses its therapeutic potential and its presence in and applicability to a modern city environment.

Keywords: *Community Music Therapy, Pirit Chanting, Healing Rituals, Hēvisi Ensemble*

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Pirit Chanting

Pirit, *paritta*, or *paritrāna* is the protective doctrine preached by the Buddha. “*Pirit* refers to Buddhist scriptures, which Buddha recited for merciful world-being” (Gamage 2003: 11). “It is a style of intoned recitation based on phonological properties of the Pali language, but restricted melodically to the Rgvedic three-tone scale. As the oldest Theravada tradition outside India, the Sinhala Theravada chant traditions also offer rich insights into Indian Buddhist musical principles” (Sheeran 2000: 968).¹ According to *Mahāvamsa*², the first Buddhist *pirit* was chanted during the reign of the second king Upatissa (410 A. D). People, animals, and all living beings were suffering due to lack of food and water and due to contagious diseases. To protect the people from this *durbhikshaya* (“terrible epidemic”), *bhikkus*³ chanted *Ratana Sutra*⁴ while walking around and sprinkling chanted *pirit vatura* or *pirit pān*⁵ all over the city of Anuradhapura. *Mahāvamsa* refers to this as *Gangā Rōhana Utsavaya* (comp. Kulathillake 1987: 68). Since then, the kings of Sri Lanka commenced *pirit* chanting during periods of drought and famine. It was believed that dangers arising from natural and supernatural powers could be averted by this means (Wijesekera 1987: 202, 203). Until today people consider chanted *pirit vatura* and *pirit nūl*⁶ as a blessing to heal all kind of diseases and to avert calamities and problems.

The aims of the *pirit* chanting match those indicated by Even Ruud, one of the leading theorists of music therapy in the Western world. In Ruud’s words, “community music therapy talks about how to humanize communities and institutions, and is concerned with health promotion and mutual caring. (...) Music has again become a social resource, a way to heal and strengthen communities as well as individuals” (2004: 12, 13). Music has an important role in building and strengthening cultural and self-identity, thus contributing to the quality of life. “Improving quality of life means that as persons we feel better about ourselves, less isolated in society, that we keep the ‘right’ balance between our roots (past tradition) and our present life; between our uniqueness and the group’s identity” (Amir 2004: 254). June Boyce-Tillman’s notion that “most cultures have used music to excite and relax people” (2000: 56, 57) is applicable to Sri Lankans’ healing ritual context, including *pirit*.

Sri Lankan Buddhists express considerable faith in the efficacy of *pirit* and this can be observed in both private and public events, in religious, social, cultural, and economic activities in both rural and urban areas. In all cases, the aim is protection and blessing of an individual and/or community. A *Pirit* chant is considered appropriate before the commencement of any new undertaking or in times of fear, an epidemic, a sickness, a long journey, the launching of a new business, before marriage, or birth giving. Obviously, the aims of *pirit* are to remove deeply rooted fears and to ensure the welfare of the community.

¹ According to C. de S. Kulathillake, the number of tones in Sri Lankan *pirit* is not limited to three, but to five, which is correct (s.a.:4).

² *Mahāvamsa* is a historical poem in Pali language, referring to the early history of Sri Lanka.

³ *Bhikku* means a buddhist monk, *Bhikkus* is the plural form.

⁴ *Sutra* derives from the Pali term “*Sutta*”, which means discourse or oral declaration of Buddha (more in Clough 1892: 703).

⁵ *Vatura* or *pān* means water.

⁶ *Nūl* refers to chanted *pirit* thread and *nūla* is a singular form of it.

In hard situations, such as fear for life, continuous illnesses, damages, or epidemics, Sri Lankan Buddhists usually called for help an astrologist, a Buddhist monk, and/or a traditional healer, while nowadays they often give priority to Western medicine. A modern lifestyle often implies uprootedness, weakening of family ties and social networks, and ultimately individual isolation and loneliness (comp. Ruud 1998: 63), which can have negative consequences on mental health. In the words of Swedish philosopher Lennart Nordenfelt, “sometimes illness exists where no disease can be found” (1991: 83, 92), referring to people unable to realize their individual goals and thus living in an unhealthy state of mind. In such situations, they need community’s help and relationship to build up a sense of belonging. Sri Lankan Buddhists believe that “*pirit* has assumed the combined role of exorcising devils, nullifying sorcery, countering curses and effecting cures by one act of chanting” (Wijesekera 1987: 207) and acts as a curative remedy. In the words of German psychotherapist Wolfgang Mastnak, “The variety of music-therapeutic results ensures that the effect of music on the psyche is based on a multifunctional process comprising physiological, emotional, and cognitive factors as well as on anthropological, cultural, and individual conditions” (Mastnak 1993: 78).

Any numbers of Buddhist monks in charge of a temple are invited to chant *pirit* by and for individuals and communities. They sit in what is considered a sacred arena, and chant together taking turns. “They do not sing in unison. Rarely do they hit the same pitch, so that the chanting sometimes gives the impression that they are singing in minor thirds or fourths. Their words are however, always together and the ornamentation, too. In this chanting of *pirit* also the *bhikkus* never go beyond the range of a minor third” (Surya Sena 2008: 21). *Pirit* is chanted either during the whole night or just for one or more hours. Anne Sheeran mentions that *pirit* ceremonies can last anywhere from one hour to seven days (2000: 969). Generally, *pirit chanting* ceremonies lasted as long as the problem required it, while following the end of civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009, one could find these ceremonies lasting for months, with the intention to bring life back to equilibrium.

A *pirit chanting* ceremony commences in a specially constructed pavilion decorated with white or silver paper or with young coconut leaves. *Mandappa* is the Sinhalese word for a pavilion, which literally means a stage (Figures 1 and 2). The *Pirit mandappa* is expected to accommodate ten to twelve monks. Usually, it takes an octagonal shape and is covered by a textile-made canopy in white color, decorated with various kinds of herbs and flowers. Strings are drawn crisscross from the canopy in a geometric pattern. Sprigs of different tender leaves are hung on the strings. The whole event emphasizes white color, which symbolizes purity, holiness, and prosperity.



Figures 1 and 2⁷: Views of a Pirit Mandappa

A small table is kept in the middle of the mandappa and covered with a white cloth (Figure 2). A tray of multi-colored flowers of several kinds, a *pirit* book, a ball of thread, a panicle of Arecanut flowers, and a fresh clay pot filled with water is placed on the table. The pot's mouth is covered with a white cloth. A tray of betel leaves with all ingredients, i.e. Arecanut, Cardamom, Cloves, and Lime etc. are kept for chewing. Sucrets, 'Yelmi', dried Ginger and other herbs are made available in a plate for clearing the throat. Lights and oil lamps are lit, and incense is burnt. At the four directions of the pavilion fresh clay pots are placed with a spread-out coconut flower in each. A small clay lamp is placed on the pots of coconut flower (Figure 1) outside the pavilion. On the floor of the pavilion are laid mats for the monks and around the pavilion mats are spread for the attendees. *Pirit* chanting ceremony requires no special costume for the monks, while the attendees wear white cloths.

⁷ Figures 1, 2 and 3 were taken by Mr. Chandana Seneviratne and reproduced here with his permission.

The proceedings commence with addressing to Buddha, *Dhamma*⁸, and *Sangha*⁹ with five precepts (*pansil*). Thereafter a senior monk explains the purpose of the ceremony and the significance of *pirit* chanting with its benefits. A monk who has a good voice and required experience acts as the leader, while the other monks join together as a chorus. Pali, the language of *pirit* is not generally understood by most of the present attendees. For the Buddhist monks' chanting is from memory, without the use of an immediate written source. The first session lasts about one hour and the *Suttas* chanted are *Mahamagala sutta*, *Ratana sutta*, and *Karaniya metta sutta*. At the end of the chanting, water (*pirit pān*) and thread (*pirit nūl*), empowered by the words uttered during the ritual and thought thus to have magical potency, are distributed to the participants (comp. Obeyesekere 1999: 86). "A piece of the thread is tied by a monk on the right hand wrist of the chief householder or patient and others while reciting a stanza repeating thrice by the monk" (Wijesekera 1987: 206).

The Role of Music

As already stated, *pirit* as a sound-producing form of human behavior refers to chanting. Its essence is vocal, and instrumental accompaniment is neither required nor expected. The question whether it is considered music or not depends on the taking into account outsiders' - *etic* or insiders' - *emic* point of view. On one hand, the chanting is elaborate and can be notated as music. While on the other hand, one should keep in mind the prohibitions for Buddhist monks to receive music education and to get involved in musical activities. In the same way, one should not forget that anybody could have inborn skills to chant or sing or could improve their talents through oral traditional experiences unlike the other preachers.

Pirit usually requires an *hēvisi* ensemble to announce the event and to invite monks to the ceremony. Such an ensemble includes a brass trumpet *horanā*, cylindrical drum *davula*, and kettle drum *tammättama* (figure 3 illustrates them from left to right in order).



Figure 3: Brass Trumpet *Horanā*, Cylindrical Drum *Davula* and Kettle Drum *Tammättama*

⁸ Dhamma refers to Buddha's preachings.

⁹ Sangha refers to Buddha's followers (Bhikkus).

Pirit chanting is non-rhythmic. *Ātānātiya dēshanāva*¹⁰ is a particularly important section of *pirit* chanting in musical terms. The performing monks organize themselves into two groups and present the chant in a dialogue form. Each group intends to show more power than the other group and uses a rough voice quality. The competitiveness between the two creates an aggressive mood, which may leave the listeners shocked. This is often related to the increase of tempo and pitch. The section is focused on chasing away devils' malefic influences. Sinhalese Buddhists believe that the monks' vibrating vocal chords have capacity to harmonize one's body, soul, and mind, remove fears and doubts, and grant prosperity. This is why pregnant women ask for a monk to chant a *pirit* to them prior to their delivery in hospitals. Such a firm belief made some gynecologists, i.e., western medicine practitioners, think of introducing *pirit* into their hospital environments in Sri Lanka.

A few years ago, gynecologist Dr. Upali Marasinghe, introduced *pirit* chanting to the Kalubowila general hospital in which he still serves as director of the maternity ward. In his opinion, *pirit* is suitable for removal of unwanted fears from women prior to their deliveries. Some of them have to be hospitalized due to unusual bleedings, miscarriages, or blood-pressure problems. Being put in a position to stop their regular work and instead lay in a bed, they develop fears in the new surrounding that eventually leads to loss of appetite and later for many psychophysical imbalances. "We don't have suitable medication, or any other treatment that would have better effect on their state of mind than the *pirit*," claimed Dr. Marasinghe in our personal communication (2009), which is highly matched with Guy Eades idea of "... the arts can be directed towards building relationships between communities and the hospitals which serve them. (...) Equally, the arts working in the community that is outside hospital buildings, enable individuals receiving health care to express and develop methods of communication which are of immense personal value and creativeness but also at times ask the health delivery organization to be self-critical" (1997: 108). "The World Health Organization sees cultural activities as necessary to what it calls 'healthy cities' and we can turn this argument to the institution of the hospital" (Miles 1997: 249).

Rituals are generally considered effective in dealing with acute psychic disorders, such as fears, and therefore limited to their cure. For instance, Dr. Marasinghe recommends pregnant women who are suffering from uncontrollable fears to listen to recorded ritual music and the *pirit* chant for the sake of their relief. In an interview led by the author on 23 February 2009, he also expressed the following opinions:

Q: Why do you, being a Western medical practitioner, propose to your patients to listen to the recordings of rituals and/or pirit?

A: There is no medicine to release patients from uncontrollable fears. In the past our ancestors practiced rituals and *pirit* to get rid of their fears. Nowadays it is impossible to practice rituals in hospital settings, so the best thing what we can do is to motivate current mothers to listen to recorded ritual sounds and/or especially *pirit* to release their unwanted fears.

¹⁰ *Ātānātiya dēshanāva* means one of the major sections of *pirit* which is chanted in the midnight to chase away the devil spirits. kus).

Q: Why are you suggesting that Western medicine has no solutions for such problems?

A: I am sorry to say, but Western medicine is a myth. We see human body as being divided into many systems and this is how Western medicine treats people partially. There are specialized doctors for mind, chest, physical disorders, eyes, ears, and so on and there is a huge pharmaceutical industry spread all over the world to support them. Medicine prescribed for one organ may be harmful for another organ. Human being is not a machine to be repaired part by part. The body, mind and soul are interconnected. Buddhist philosophy suggests the same, and human efforts should keep them in balance. Destruction of this balance results in diseases, which doctors control by prescribing pills. This is not a complete healing and I am against it although I am a Western medical specialist.

Tony Wigram's opinion that "After nearly 250 years of separation, medicine, health psychology, and music therapy are approaching each other again, realizing that man is not a 'machine', but a complex, bio-psycho-social being" (2002: 21) provides a useful point concerning the shared, broader understanding of disease within the ritualistic and Western medical domains in Sri Lanka.

Potentials of Pirit Chanting Applicable to Modern City Life Environment

1. Social gathering enables the families and individuals to meet neighbors and other people to share their feelings, i.e. to strengthen social networks.
2. Community members' shared involvement in preparing the complex of *pirit* setting is widely understood as maintenance of public harmony.
3. Getting rid of fears from public exposure to the society equals building self-confidence through focusing the group's attention to a troubled individual.
4. Focusing the group's attention to a troubled individual helps the individuals to overcome feelings of loneliness, ignorance, and lack of social understanding.
5. The fear of becoming possessed by devils gives place to realization that devils are in fact, afraid of humans. They listen to the monks' chants and blessings to restore the patient's health.
6. The monks' blessings bring relaxation, and comfort to all involved.
7. Sitting on the ground throughout the ritual contributes to the restoration of psychophysical balance of the participants.
8. Ceremony treats the person as a whole, without taking the affected part of the body out of the total context.
9. Distribution of *pirit vatura* and *pirit nūla* removes participants' psychic problems with the belief of magical potentiality of *pirit*.

Conclusion

Sri Lankan case study demonstrates how important it is to take into account cultural understandings and interpretations and to focus on performative nature of diagnosis, treatment, and healing. In Benjamin Koen's terms, this has potential "to lead us to much deeper understandings of how disease, loss, grief, pain, and suffering are made meaningful, and how health and healing can be created and maintained" (2008: 15). Consequently, medical ethnomusicologists focus on "how

healers and healing practices orchestrate the production and apprehension of sounds and the performance of music as one of those technologies of healing” (Roseman 2008: 18). Wolfgang Mastnak’s notion that “...archaic as well as ethnological practices comprise a high level of knowledge of natural healing-factors” (1993: 83), is highly applicable to *pirit* chanting which is believed to be the most effective curative tool for the Sri Lankan communities. The study of musical healing event, as demonstrated here, is a meeting point of medical and musical knowledge to upgrade the quality of modern city life environment, which is further proved by the Gary Ansdell’s notion that, “The current elaboration of Community Music Therapy is timely, given the newly available and interconnecting body of thinking (and rethinking) in the areas of music and its relationship to socio-cultural life” (2004: 65).

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Art and Survival - Our Endangered Cultures

- *Vanishing echoes*
Victoria Vorreiter (USA)

Vanishing Echoes

Victoria Vorreiter⁺ (USA)

Abstract

Experts agree that with the rush to globalization, half of the world's 6,900 languages will disappear within the next fifty years, and with them will vanish the ideas, history, culture, stories, and songs that these languages embody. This loss is felt not only by the community that has practiced ancestral traditions throughout the millennia, but also by mankind, for cultural diversity provides a source of exchange, innovation and creativity that is vital to the survival of humankind.

For the ancient civilizations of mainland Southeast Asia rooted in oral tradition, music is a primary portal to understanding the world. As these smaller communities become assimilated into the dominant political and economic powers in this new age, may action be taken to preserve their arts, songs and ceremonies in recognition of the multiplicity that once was ours.

Keywords: *Endangered Languages, Oral Tradition, Traditional Music, Multiculturalism, Southeast Asia*

“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe.” (John Muir)



Mien musician accompanies bride on the Dzat – wedding ceremony, Phayao, Thailand © Victoria Vorreiter 2007

Languages – Living, Endangered, and Extinct

Our world of multiplicity stands at a decisive crossroads as the inevitable rush towards standardizing globalization finds its way to even the most remote corners of the planet. Launched in great part by technology in its manifold forms and massive international trade, a clear line in the chronology of humanity has been drawn, a before-and-after from which there is no doubt and no escape. The last century has seen the loss of innumerable languages, songs, crafts, practices and lifestyles, and the next has little hope of saving those in the smaller populations that remain, which until now have contributed to a dizzying, breathtaking mix, proving the human species one of the most diverse on earth.

The causes of cultural homogeneity are many and complex. Assimilation into a dominant culture results as smaller communities adopt the language, views and mores of larger political and economic powers. Young generations, lured by the modern ethos that cities offer, are moving away from their villages. Compulsory schooling favors the national language. The growth of global media, the introduction of money, the distribution of certain material goods, religious conversion and immigration hasten the dissolution of oral cultures. Such ruinous factors as invasion, war, and ethnic cleansing can extinguish native tongues definitively.

Responding to the urgency of this shift, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) maintains an atlas of languages facing extinction. Linguists estimate that more than 6,900 languages currently exist,

ranging in size from those with hundreds of millions of speakers to those with only one or two. Experts concur that this number will diminish by half by year 2050. With the loss of these nearly 3,500 tongues, the world of ideas, history, culture, beliefs, stories and songs that they embody will also vanish. This is a decimating reality.

Language and the Arts

Language is the dynamic vehicle that allows us to express our understanding of the outer world and our perception of the inner one. In oral societies, this finds form as stories and myths, drama and poetry, rituals and songs. These arts, rather than playing a peripheral role, are in fact ingenious strategies, crucial for transmitting culture and traditions intact from one generation to the next. Together the arts make up the very foundation of humanity, giving each community its unique sense of identity, history, values, and spirituality, providing a sense of structure, a “support—of moral order, cohesion, vitality, and creative powers.” (J. Campbell, *Myths to Live By*, 9)

Take away language and the arts it inspires and that community loses its anchor and its wellspring, for what follows is “uncertainty and with uncertainty, disequilibrium, since life requires life-supporting illusions.” (Ibid.) We have only to look at indigenous societies whose oral traditions have been debased, forgotten, even wiped out. Without the communal identity and connection that culture offers, a people becomes susceptible to degradation, instability, and dissolution. A traditional Akha saying expresses well this lack of center, “If a village has no music, how can it be called a village?” The arts emerge as a social construct evolved to harmonize the internal and external energies of a community with the natural world. They become an important means of initiating and recognizing members of that society and of communicating a people’s life-credo to succeeding generations.

This loss is felt not only by the community that has practiced these traditions throughout millennia, but also by mankind. Multiculturalism enhances the human experience, offering a sense of richness, resilience, strength and wonder. There is much to be gleaned from the wisdom, perspectives, the sheer beauty of others. Just as the long-term survival of life on earth depends on the diversity of species and ecosystems, so perhaps too must the survival of humanity be sustained by cultural pluralism. At its General Conference on Cultural Diversity in November 2001, UNESCO declared in its opening statement: “Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. As a source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. In this sense, it is the common heritage of humanity and should be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of present and future generations.” (UNESCO, *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, Article 1, p. 13)

The Power of Music



Karen S'gaw musicians – New Year festival, playing Kwaie horns, Chiang Mai, Thailand © Victoria Vorreiter 2009

When words are expressed through melody and rhythm, the reach of language is infinitely expanded. Music indeed is the most powerful of the arts because of its special qualities, for sound is unique in all the range of perception. Songs and the instrumental rites they evoke are able to alter at the same time our body, mind, heart and soul. Without physical form, music is invisible, intangible, abstract. Melodies and rhythms must enter into us to be perceived, seeping into the unconscious where they can instantly transform each person in mysterious and distinct ways. It is not surprising that music is integral with emotional life, the sacred experience, and healing. Yet tone and pulse have the extraordinary ability to be felt physically when vibrations beat on the body in sound waves. The constant thudding of a drumbeat is able to bring together the disparate energies of an entire group in an instant. Music is not static. Phrases chanted in a continual loop for hours or days unfold in a continuum of time and space that echoes the eternal circular passages found in nature—the phases of days, seasons, planetary phenomena, cycles of a single life and passages of generations. Music finds order in repetitious verses and organized rhythmic periods, making it an essential mnemonic tool to anchor information. Music, as a medium that transcends language, is ever-present and integral in the lives of traditional peoples because of its mighty power and mystery.

Traditional Peoples of Southeast Asia

Oral tradition lives on in the foothills of the Himalayas where Laos, Myanmar and Thailand once knew no boundaries. Throughout the millennia this region of

Southeast Asia, evocatively known as the Golden Triangle, has served as a cultural and historical crossroads of ancient migrations from the highlands of China and Tibet, trade routes connecting India and Mongolia, and passages along the great rivers of Asia. Yet for all the movement and interchange, the Golden Triangle harbors a staggering number and variety of peoples living in remote hill villages, which have effectively safeguarded their individuality. Numbering over one hundred thirty groups and subgroups, each tribe represents an extraordinary, unique world, distinctive in language, customs, arts, religion, dress, and features.

Prominent among this multiplicity are the Akha, Lahu, Lisu Hmong, Mien and Karen, six distinct peoples who originally migrated from southwest and south central China, converging in the mountain ranges that sweep Southeast Asia. Preferring high altitudes, these groups traditionally live as hunters and subsistence dry-field farmers, practicing swidden agriculture on steep, forested mountain slopes. Despite the necessity for frequent migrations in search of harvestable terrain, they have flourished, maintaining their independence and identity to a high degree.

Each of these major groups is composed of numerous branches, which have individually moved from one remote mountaintop to another, fanning out throughout the region. It is possible for two subgroups to have developed in such isolation that their languages and traditions are incomprehensible to each other. This diversity in peoples highlights the stunning variety found in the musical traditions in the Golden Triangle.

Music of the Golden Triangle



Akha Puli Hulai shamans – blessing ceremony at spirit gate, Muang Sing, Laos © Victoria Vorreiter 2006



Lahu Shi man and grandson – harvest festival Keng Tung, Myanmar © Victoria Vorreiter 2005

For these ancient civilizations of Southeast Asia, a primary portal to understanding the world is through sound. People live close to nature and listen to an earth that is never silent. Their universe is perceived as a dynamic, inseparable whole, and its rhythms can be found everywhere, from the cycles of the seasons to the passages of their lives. In a harsh and variable wilderness where survival depends on full awareness of the physical world, they have developed a heightened auditory sense to navigate the elements. Knowledge is inherited through sound, as it is handed down through time and memory. Songs and stories reveal the wisdom of the first ancestors, passing in an unbroken chain from mother to daughter, father to son, shaman to apprentice. Traditional peoples consider that which is audible a reflection of inaudible energy beyond the earthly world. Ancient chants and trance rituals provide the link to the unseen realm of spirits. Whereas modern society has shifted attention to the visual world, overwhelming the eye, traditional cultures of Southeast Asia continue to foster auditory perception, which remains keenly attuned and profoundly valued.

Aligned so perceptively to their sonic environment, traditional peoples listen to the songs, ceremonies and stories of their forebears at a deep level and with great reverence. These are the living archives of centuries of accumulated culture, history, and tenets of faith, providing the eternal link between those who have gone before with those who will follow. An all-night healing ceremony or a three-day wedding has great significance beyond the function of treatment or union. These highly organized, intricately ordered, meticulously observed rites fulfill a sacred purpose that is engrained in people's consciousness and essential to their worldview.



*Eng musician with Glung Glan – fertility festival
Kengtung, Myanmar © Victoria Vorreiter 2006*

The keepers of the bardic tradition – the master musicians, shamans, headmen, matriarchs and patriarchs – use their rich trove of songs, legends and rites to connect people with something greater than themselves. Music, supported by ritual and formality, anchors members of a community to their life-source. It reunites them with their ancestors and aligns them with their deities. Ceremonies and songs remind them of their origins and preserve collective memory. Music promotes a sense of communal harmony by instilling identity and belonging. Songs are the chronicles and oracles of tribal ways of life.

Intangible legacy

The music, myths, and ceremonies that express a people's worldview are the outcome of sustained collective devotion, creativity, and effort. These traditions are robust in the way they have survived for millennia, but they are also extremely fragile, for unlike monuments or places in nature, oral tradition remains an intangible legacy.

In most animistic societies rooted in oral culture, no written record of their beliefs exists. Rather they are imprinted in the memories of those who continue to live them. With the advance of globalization and the rush to modernity, young people are foregoing the ways of their ancestors. Should one generation fail to pass on what it knows to the next, thousands of years of accumulated knowledge will die with little trace within a few decades.

The oral traditions found in the Golden Triangle that were once so vital a century ago are in jeopardy of vanishing with the wind. We must bear witness to the majesty and diversity of cultures on our planet by making a commitment to swift action, preserving those arts that are in decline and safeguarding those that continue to live and evolve in this new age. Should we lose these, we will surely lose a part of the soul of our humanity.

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Recent Research Projects

- **Yaoi as Fanwork: Cultural Appropriation in Modern Japanese Culture**
Yu Ishikawa (Japan)
- **Playing Techniques of New Pieces of Koto Music in Japanese Urban Culture**
Kumkom Pornprasit (Thailand)
- **The Historical Representation of Place in the Military base Town of Koza: The “Reassessment” of US Military Presence as a Developmental Resource**
Takashi Yamazaki (Japan)

Yaoi as Fanwork:

Cultural Appropriation in Modern Japanese Culture

Yu Ishikawa⁺ (Japan)

Abstract

This paper aims to discuss the generation of Yaoi fanwork, one of the forms of cultural appropriation in modern Japanese culture. The concept of appropriation as used in this paper refers to a cultural practice of the people belonging to a subculture, who redefine the dominant meaning to suit their own purpose. Yaoi fanwork is defined as a female-oriented production that focuses on the depiction of male bonding in popular media and develops it into a romantic relationship. Through this cultural practice, female fans adapt and appropriate dominant texts. This paper investigates how Yaoi fans subvert authorship and canonicity by examining self-published works. Thus, it is concluded that Yaoi fanwork is an alternate form of creativity in modern popular culture.

Keywords: *Popular Culture, Cultural Appropriation, Manga, Yaoi Studies.*

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the generation of Yaoi fanwork and to examine the cultural impact of these alternative texts on modern Japanese culture. The paper focuses on Yaoi adaptations of manga (Japanese comics). Yaoi is a female-oriented media, comprised mostly of manga and novels that deal with romantic relationships between male characters. It has become highly popular around the world and created an enormous fandom (fan community) among females. It has also attracted academic interest in the fields of feminism, gender studies, and psychoanalysis since the mid-1980s. Previous studies have mainly focused on the sociological or psychological meanings of Yaoi for female audiences and connected these to social institutions or feminine psychology. They have frequently discussed the reasons why (heterosexual) women find male love stories engrossing: Females are liberated from the oppressive gender–power relationship, and thus can safely enjoy the story of an equal relationship (See Ueno 1998, Nobi 2003).¹ Few studies, however, have thus far examined the textual mechanisms themselves. Analyzing Yaoi novels from the viewpoint of literary studies, Yōko Nagakubo protests that Yaoi studies should focus on not only “the outside of text” but also on its content (Nagakubo 2005, 2). This paper aims to investigate how Yaoi fanwork appropriates large popular cultures and generates alternative meanings.

It focuses on Yaoi fanwork, especially *dōjinshi* (self-published work). Yaoi is generally classified into two genres: original work and fanwork. The former is commercial or self-published work, which focuses on romantic and/or erotic relationships between males.² The latter is produced by amateur fans. It borrows male characters from popular media and develops their male bonding into a romantic relationship. It is distributed as *dōjinshi* or exhibited on websites, and functions as a communication tool for the fans. *Dōjinshi* is regarded as a materialized a personal interpretation of the source text by fans.

First, an brief examination and survey the history of Yaoi followed by an analysis of how female fans develop their interpretations of the source text by examining the conventions of Yaoi will be presented. Third, details demonstrating how they appropriate the existing text in the process of creating fanwork. The concept of “appropriation” mentioned here refers to a cultural practice, mostly by oppressed people, that redefines the dominant meaning by displacing the cultural element in the social system into another context for their own purposes.³

The Brief History

Yaoi is currently defined as a product, including both original work and fanwork, which focuses on human and/or romantic relationships between male characters by and for females. The original usage, however, was rather different. Yaoi has

¹ Citations from Japanese works have been translated in English by the author. Their titles have been romanized, translated into English, and indicated within parenthesis.

² The first successful commercial publication of Yaoi was in a magazine entitled *June*, which was launched in 1978. Boys' Love (BL) was established as a new genre of Yaoi in the early 1990s.

³ The term has been used in anthropology, cultural studies, and other related fields to describe contemporary social resistance.

being developing among female manga fans since the late 1970s. The term “Yaoi” was first used by a group of amateur female manga artists. In Japanese, Yaoi is an acronym for “**Y**ama nashi, **O**chi nashi, **I**mi nashi” (No Climax, No Resolution, and No Meaning). It was originally employed to criticize stories that were considered to lack any storytelling technique. Akiko Hatsu, one of the proponents of the term, describes it as follows: “As the editors strictly controlled the composition of stories by artists, we always considered climax, resolution, and meaning in our works” (Hatsu 1993, 136).

The subjects of the early Yaoi works were clearly influenced by the manga artist group Nijūyōnen Gumi (the Year 24 Shōwa Era Group), which consists of professional female artists. The group mainly published love stories about beautiful boys in shōjo manga (comics for girls). Eiji Ōtsuka argues that the works reflect the problem of how the female authors came to terms with their femininity and their feminine bodies as sexual objects (Ōtsuka 2001, 78-79). The younger generation, which was influenced by them, also tried to create male-male love stories. They were, however, rarely accepted in commercial manga magazines at that time. Hatsu states that they “could publish them only in *dōjinshi*” (Hatsu, op. cit.). Thus, as a genre, Yaoi were male-male stories composed by young females and brought out in self-publishing media. As Yaoi was divided into various subgenres throughout the 1980s, it gradually lost its negative denotation.

Yaoi fanwork is now defined as a product that deliberately interprets the relationship between male characters in the source text as a romantic one. The source text is selected from different popular media such as manga, anime (Japanese animation), video games, novels, and movies. Yaoi adaptations became popular in the 1980s, in the background of the Japanese bubble economy. The Comic Market (the Comiket) is the largest manga convention in the world. The first Comiket was held in 1975 by manga fans; it is now a three-day long event that is held twice a year at the Tokyo Big Sight venue. It attracts 35,000 *sākuru* (circles), retailers of fanworks, and approximately 500,000 attendees. According to the research by Akashi Sugimoto in 2004, 71.2% of the circle participants in the Comiket are females (Sugimoto 2005, 290). The Comiket is primarily a place to distribute or sell not only fanwork but also original work by amateur artists. However, fanwork, especially Yaoi fanwork, has a major presence today (Ibid., 296-297).

How Do Female Fans Interpret and Appropriately the Source Text in Yaoi?

a. Adapting the Preferred Meaning

It is significant that Yaoi fans find a social bond between male characters in the source text. Consider, for example, *Katekyō Hitman Reborn!* (*Reborn!*) by Akira Amano. *Reborn!* is one of the popular shōnen manga (comics for boys). It has been serialized since May 2004 as *Shūkan Shōnen Janpu* (Weekly Shōnen Jump), one of the most popular weekly boy-oriented manga anthologies. Today, it has generated an enormous fandom, consisting mostly of Yaoi fans. The Comic Market Catalog, which includes the list of participating circles and general information for attendees, indicates an increase in the number of *Reborn!* fan circles since its anime adaptation

premiered in December 2006. Chart 1 shows the changes in Reborn! fan circles in the Comiket from December 2004 to December 2008 (Comic Market Junbikai, 2004-2008).

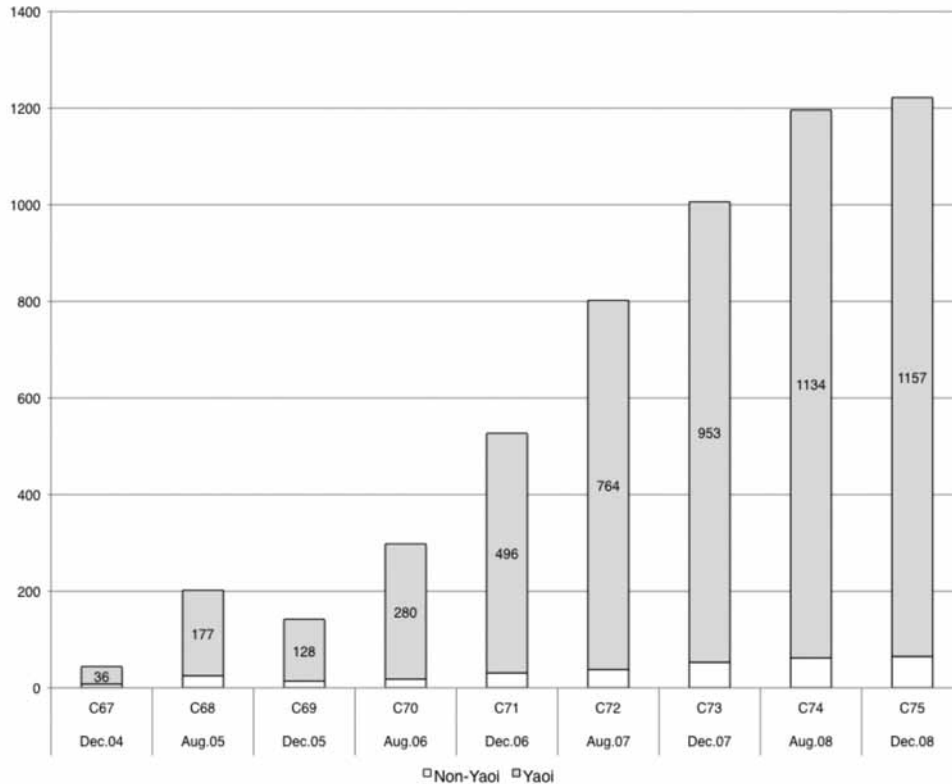


Chart 1: Changes in Reborn! fan circles in the Comiket from December 2004 to December 2008.

It indicates that Yaoi circles account for an average of 91.9% of all the Reborn! fan circles.⁴ Examining this in detail, the male-homosociality foregrounded in the source text tends to be preferred as the main subject of Yaoi fanwork. More specifically, the fellowship, rivalry, and the master/disciple relationship in the source text are popular in the Yaoi adaptations of *Reborn!*. Mari Nishimura points out that a source text should fulfill three conditions in order to be suitable for adaptation as Yaoi fanwork: a bond between male characters, rivalry, and a sense of isolation from private domains (Nishimura 2002, 75). Nishimura also maintains that the popular source texts of Yaoi fanwork often possess these characteristics (ibid.).

Relationships in Yaoi fanwork are based on *kappuringu* (coupling). Coupling, the fundamental convention in Yaoi, refers to a pairing that indicates a romantic relationship. The two participants in the relationship are referred to as *seme* (the top, the penetrator) and *uke* (the bottom, the penetrated), and this role is generally fixed. Nobita Nobi, a Yaoi fan artist, states that the main thesis of Yaoi fanworks is the narrative of the fans' favorite coupling (Nobi 2003, 233-234). Yaoi fans find

⁴ The criteria for identifying a Yaoi circle are the following:

- (i) Two male characters and/or male-kappuring (coupling; mentioned later) are drawn in *sakuru katto* (circles cut: the information of participating circles with pictures drawn by sellers).
- (ii) Male character is referred to as *uke* (the bottom in coupling) in circle cut.
- (iii) Considering the custom of arranging circles at the convention layout, even if a circle has no information of (i) or (ii), the circle surrounded by two Yaoi circles is identified as Yaoi.

some romantic and/or erotic factors in the original homosocial relationship and develop another narrative according to the code of coupling. Yaoi fanwork adapts, redefines, and manipulates the preferred meaning of the source text by means of conventions established by fans.

However, female fans are not the primary target of the market strategy of source texts such as *Reborn!*. Male or boy-oriented media are often selected as the source text of Yaoi. Past Comikets indicate that the source text, having an enormous Yaoi fandom, tends to belong to young male-oriented media such as *Kyaputen Tsubasa* (*Captain Tsubasa*), *Suramu Danku* (*Slam Dunk*), and *Tenisu No Ōjisama* (*The Prince of Tennis*) (Comic Market Junbikai, 2005a). In this sense, female fans subvert the dominant meaning system from the viewpoint of the marginalized reader through Yaoi adaptations.

b. Subverting the Boundaries between the Canon and Fanwork

Female fans not only adapt the relationship between male characters in their interpretations, but also appropriate the source text by actively creating an alternative text. Yaoi fans, which are not always the authors' ideal readers, appropriate the source text as their own. This appropriation is practiced through the physical activity, drawing. Consider, for example, a fan artist's remark. Yun Kōga, who began her career as a Yaoi fan artist in the 1980s and is now well known as a professional manga artist, says that she derives an egotistical sense of satisfaction by assimilating the source text and drawing fan works (Yonezawa.ed. 2001, 81). Kōga's remark shows that there is a complicated distance between the source text and fanwork. The objective of Yaoi fanwork seems to be the assimilation of the source text rather than "repetition with critical distance" (Hutcheon 2000, 18). An interpretation as a passive act is linked to a drawing as an active act in the process of creating Yaoi fanwork. Female fans, readers of the source text, become the authors of fan texts through this process. These multiple authors collectively refer to both the source text and fan texts as many variations in Yaoi fandom. Thus, the source text is accessible to female fans as an open resource; they generate personal interpolations by referring to the interrelated texts. Fans read the source text and the fan texts, and then create new ideal versions of the stories; these reinterpretations are then read by other fans. Thus, fan texts propagate themselves through an interconnected network. This intertextual interaction indicates the constant open-cycle relation between reception and reproduction (see *Chart 2*).

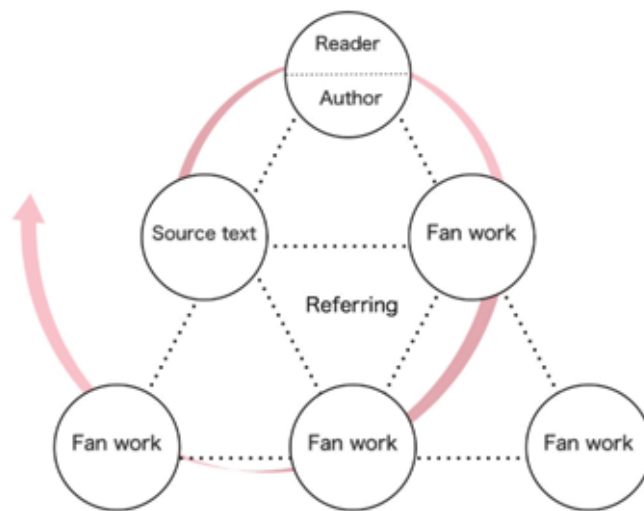


Chart 2: The open-circulation of generating narratives in Yaoi fandom.

This cultural practice raises various social issues: copyright infringement, opposition to Yaoi fanwork that poaches the canonical writings, criticism of Yaoi for not being a truly creative act, and so on. There is space here only to discuss the reaction of authors and critics to Yaoi fanwork. For example, an editor has expressed his disgust toward the movement of Yaoi fanwork based on *Captain Tsubasa* as follows: “Fanworks of *Captain Tsubasa* seem to be highly popular among young females, but the stories are terrible.... Hyu-ga and Wakashimadu [author’s note: male characters of CT] are angered by it, exclaiming ‘We are not queer!’” (Shūeisha 1987). The publisher’s remark suggests that he objects to the violation of the canon in Yaoi fanwork, rather than copyright infringement. Related to this issue, a critic has stated that Yaoi fanwork is “not a parody”: “Female fans are not interested in parody. They only poach characters and the basic settings of the source text to create homosexual stories” (Ajima 2004, 104). The problem here is neither the representation of homosexual relationships in Yaoi, nor whether or not they may be called parodies, instead, it is the subversion of the distance between the canon and the derivative text.

Conclusion

The main points in this paper can be summarized as follows: First, appropriation in Yaoi fanwork refers to the act of adapting the preferred meaning of the source text. Such appropriation focuses on the original homosocial relationship and develops another narrative through an alternative interpretation of this relationship. Second, Yaoi fanwork also appropriates the source text itself through the drawing of fan texts that assimilate it. The process of the creation of fanwork opens up the possibility of subverting the distance between the canonical and the derivative text. Third, the fan community participates in this process. Yaoi fans read both fan texts and the source text; they then collectively and constantly produce their own ideal versions of the story of two male characters. The source text is relativized as one of the variations in Yaoi fandom. Thus, Yaoi fanwork calls into question the

boundaries we unconsciously take for granted, such as “the canon/the derivative text,” “the author/the reader,” and “mainstream/heterodox.” The appropriation in Yaoi fanwork not only reflects a significant movement against the dominant culture by marginalized females, but also prompts discussion on the boundaries between class structures. Yaoi fanwork is an alternative form of creativity in modern society.⁵

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⁵ The issue of copyright infringement and the mechanism of desire among Yaoi fans (why their interpretations are focused on male relationship) are still to be discussed in further research.

⁶ The references written in Japanese have been romanized, translated into English, and indicated within parenthesis by the author.

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Playing Techniques of New Pieces of Koto Music in Japanese Urban Culture

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Abstract

A major element in the social understanding of urban culture is the relationship between social change and its impact on artistic culture. In Japan, the Koto is a musical instrument that plays a major role in Japanese urban society as its character has been dynamically developed along with Japanese urban culture and society. The changes to playing techniques and the birth of new ones along with various tempo changes in melody create a contemporary sound, which reflects more playing freedom. Additionally, differences in the style of switching the playing pressure applied to the strings have occurred as well as the new colorful combination of Koto with opera singing. These above mentioned developments and changes have been directly influenced by social urbanization in direction, degree, and character.

Keywords: *Koto, Ikuta-ryu, Yamada-ryu, Playing Technique*

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The study of urban culture is an interdisciplinary field where scholars research the needs of city dwellers and attempts to understand how they live together. They collectively construct ways of living and socially invest in cultural resources in order to improve the community's quality of life. In Japan, the Koto is a musical instrument that originated in a city dating back at least one thousand years. Its development was a result of responses and interactions with its expanding urban environment as well as mirroring the historical development of the country as a whole. Today's Koto performance methods and regulations have also changed from those in found in the past. In this article, the author will present the playing techniques of new pieces of Koto Music from the perspective of urban musical practices in Osaka and Kyoto. Specifically, his paper aims to discuss the playing techniques of contemporary pieces of Koto music in the style of the *Ikuta School* and *Yamada School*. The *Ikuta School* style was developed in the *Kansai* region, which is now the area of Osaka city; while a younger school was developed by *Yamada Kengyo* (1757-1817) in the *Kanto* region that currently comprises Tokyo. Both schools flourished in the expanding urban culture and enabled the younger generations to develop their playing techniques and repertoire, which are unique to their localities and urban settings.

In this study, the researcher examined the new playing techniques of Koto music employed in the performance of *Ikuta School* pieces such as *Tori no Yoni*, the most famous contemporary Koto piece written by *Sawai Tadao* and *Sousei Dai Ichi Ban* written by *Matsumoto Masao*. Other compositions of *Sawai Tadao* such as *Homura*, a piece written in 1979 and means "fire"; *Jogen no Kyoku*, another well-known new Koto piece; *Yomigaeru Itsutsu no Uta*, also written in 1979; *Ryu – Ryu*, one of the latest Koto pieces of the *Sawai School* written in 2008 by *Sawai Tadao's* son, *Sawai Hikaru*. The *Yamada School's* style composition selected for this study was *Seki Heki no Fu* written by a well-known national artist, *Nakanoshima Kinichi*. This song is considered the most famous modern-day Koto piece of the *Yamada School*.

The research findings are based on the field study in which the researcher took Koto lessons with teachers from both schools, *Iwahori Keiko* from the *Ikuta School* and *Nitani Tomiga* from the *Yamada School*. Major factors for the transformation of new Koto compositions and playing styles were identified. It was found that a number of new and different Koto playing techniques were introduced and combined with the traditional playing techniques. This resulted in many transformed and innovative playing styles, some of which have not yet been properly named. The major characteristics of contemporary Koto music are grouped under the following headings:

1. Changes in Tuning Technique

2. Changes in Playing Technique

- 2.1 The strings are played with the right hand tilted and its fingers pointing towards the tail end of a Koto
- 2.2 Harmonic playing techniques
- 2.3 *Uji Zume* playing techniques
- 2.4 *Vibrato* playing techniques

- 2.5 Hitting the strings with the palm of the left hand while swaying the right wrist so that the *Tsume* on the right-hand index and middle fingers scratch rather than pluck the strings
- 2.6 Plucking or scraping the strings on the left side of the *Ji*, (The *Ji* are the independent, movable bridges under each string in the shape of an inverted Y)
- 2.7 Plucking the strings outside the *Ryugaku* (The *Ryugaku* is a wooden bridge to the right of the player just before where the strings are fastened)
- 2.8 Hitting the strings with wooden stick to create special sounds
- 2.9 Hitting the Koto body with the palms of the left and right hands to create special sounds
3. High Ratio of Left-hand Playing in the *Pizzicato* Technique
4. Plucking the Strings with the *Tsume* and Fingers in the Same Melody System (The *Tsume* is a fingertip pick in the form of a wearable ring)
5. Harmonic Plucking of Many Strings at the Same Time
6. Playing with the Left and Right Hands in Two Different Melodies
7. Tempo Changes in Three New Performance Styles: Fast, Non-rhythmic Melody From Slow to Fast, and a Progression to a Slower Tempo Towards the End
8. Alternating Light and Firm Hand Pressures
9. Opera Singing Accompanied by the Koto

Details of each of the above headings are described below:

1. Changes in Tuning Techniques

First, introduction to tuning the instrument. In the past, no assisting device was used in Koto tuning and a western-styled tuning instrument has been recently introduced for convenience. Traditionally, the scales of each string are tuned to the first string or open string that could be pre-tuned to any pitch of the player's choice. This tuning method allowed for flexibility in low or high-pitched tuning of Koto strings, which could be altered to accommodate the voices of different singers whose best pitch varied. Therefore, traditional Koto tuning was usually determined by the optimal pitch of the singer. (*Iwahori Keiko*, Interview, October 21, 2008).

The following pictures show Western-styled tuning instruments that have been introduced to assist in the tuning for modern-day Koto music.



Figure 1: From left: Tuning fork – Onsa and a round turner – Fue.



Figure 2: Today's tuning instruments

The bulky western-style tuning instruments of the past have evolved into the slimmer electronic versions. The use of tuning instruments has resulted in a uniformity of Koto scales throughout nearly all regions of Japan. This differs from the traditional tuning practice, which was primarily determined by the singer's voice.

Second, modification in the scales of each song. The research found that in new Koto pieces, the distance of the scales between strings are far more complex or are tuned differently to the major scale. Such string adjustment appears only in the piece's notation and the adjusted scales generally go without a proper designation.

Third, modification in the use of the first string as an open string for tuning. This study found that new Koto pieces are usually tuned to lower pitches than those in the traditional practice. However, such modification is not imperative for the new Koto pieces. It represents only one of the many creative features of contemporary Koto music.

Fourth, scale adjustment during a performance. This adjustment is achieved by relocating each string's movable bridge known as *Ji*. It is a well-known fact that all Koto players must be able to adjust the scales mid-piece, because all advanced pieces of both the *Ikuta* School and *Yamada* School require at least 2-3 scale changes during a performance. In *Aoi no Ue*, a highly complex 35-minute piece written by *Yamada Kengyo* during the *Edo* period, there are as many as 5 scale changes. When the moving of the *Ji* is required during a concert, the player may mark the additional *Ji* positions on the strings or body of the Koto to ensure an accurate adjustment. If an error has been inadvertently committed, a skilled player can immediately re-adjust the *Ji* while continuing to play with the right hand.

Nitani Tomiga explained in an interview that new Koto pieces of the *Yamada* School do not generally require any scale adjustment or *Ji* movement during a performance. Players play the same pre-tuned pitch for the entire performance. This is the case with *Seki Heki no Fu*, a famous contemporary Koto piece from the *Yamada* School.

The general practice of the *Ikuta* School in this regard is not yet clear and their players do not pay much consideration to it. *Iwahori Keiko* explains in an interview that some *Ikuta* School pieces are played to the pre-tuned pitch with no adjustment at all. Examples of such songs are: *Tori no Yoni*, the most famous new *Ikuta* School piece written by *Sawai Tadao* and *Sousei Dai Ichi Ban*, another new *Ikuta* School piece written by *Matsumoto Masao*. However, other *Ikuta* School style pieces require some scale adjustment during a performance, but players do not pause to move the *Ji* as in traditional practice. They move the *Ji* while performing and the performance continues without pausing. One example of the new Koto pieces that require as many as 50 movements of the *Ji* is *San Ju Sou* written by *Koyama Kiyoshige*.

2. Changes in Playing Techniques:

During the field studies that focused on the playing techniques of the new Koto music and the new Koto pieces themselves, the researcher found a number of newly created playing techniques, some of which are assigned specific names

while others go without. The playing techniques whose detailed features will be discussed here have never been found in the traditional or general Koto pieces. Many playing techniques have been developed for diverse effects and playing styles in the new contemporary pieces. Below are the details of these new playing techniques:

2.1 The Strings are Played with the Right Hand Tilted and Its Fingers Pointing Towards the Tail End of a Koto

This technique is popular with new Koto pieces in which players tilt or turn both hands at different angles for a more creative performance. The right hand or the playing hand is tilted in such a way that the *Tsume* point toward the *Ji* or the tail end of a Koto while the strings are plucked. The technique is generally used when the right thumb and index finger are played together.



Figure 3: The right hand is tilted and its fingers pointing toward the tail end of a Koto.

2.2 Harmonic Playing Techniques

This technique is used to produce a note that is one octave higher. The thumb, middle, and index fingers of the left hand are lightly rested on the upper section of the strings mid-way between the *Ji* and the *Ryugaku*. This is followed by the plucking of a string with the right thumb. Normally when an open string is plucked its entire length vibrates. However, the finger positions in this playing technique generates a double vibration on both the left and right sides of the strings that are being pressed down in the middle. The technique also raises the note to be one octave higher.



Figure 4: Illustrate the use of the middle finger, index finger, and thumb of the left hand to touch the marked positions on the strings while playing the string with the right thumb.



Figure 5: Playing the strings with the left hand's little fingers and thumb.

2.3 Uji Zume Playing Techniques

Uji Zume is a new playing technique that uses the black ring of the *Tsume* of the right hand's index finger to strike strings just to the left of the *Ryugaku*. It is a similar technique to the swaying of the hand to the right while scratching the middle finger on the strings.



Figure 6: Brushing or hitting a string with the middle finger.

2.4 Vibrato Playing Techniques

The *Vibrato* technique can be played by the index and the middle fingers of the left hand in the same way as the *Tsuki Iro* technique. Usually the *Tsuki Iro* technique uses two fingers to press on the left side of the bridge in rapid succession and the string is raised up one tone from the original tone. The *Vibrato* technique presses the string to make a higher sound of less than one tone and repeats it many times.

Sometimes the *Vibrato* technique cannot be clearly differentiated from the *Uri Iro* and *Hiki Iro* techniques. *Vibrato* produces oscillating sounds by the catching and releasing of strings with the left hand in rapid succession. The *Uri Iro* and *Hiki Iro* techniques are sometimes incorporated into the *Vibrato* technique. In traditional pieces, the *Vibrato* technique does not require the pulling or pressing of many strings. However in new Koto music, the *Vibrato* technique requires the numerous pulling or pressing of strings by the left hand after being played by the right, which creates the vibrato's oscillating high and low pitched tones.

2.5 Hitting the Strings with the Palm of the Left Hand While the Right Wrist is Swayed so that the Tsume on the Right Hand's Index and Middle Fingers Scratch Rather Than Pluck the Strings.

This new Koto playing technique combines two playing techniques together. The first technique involves the use of the base of the left palm to hit the upper part of the strings. With each strike at least three strings are hit at random positions, but it usually falls on the left side of the *Ji* when the left hand is used. Sometimes the right palm is used in a similar fashion and sometimes both hands are used simultaneously at various sections of the strings. When the right hand's palm is used, the striking position usually falls on the right side of the *Ji*. When both palms are used, they usually hit in alternate fashion as illustrated in figure 7.

The second playing technique involves a strumming technique similar to the *Tremolo*. The difference lies in the swaying of the *Tsume* on the right hand's index

and middle fingers over the strings and playing them in no specific order. The strings are alternately brushed or strummed up and down either from the high to low pitched strings or vice versa as shown in figure 8.



Figure 7: Illustrate the use of the base of the left palm on the strings.



Figure 8: Illustrate the use of the right hand's index and middle fingers on various positions of the strings.

2.6 Plucking or Scraping the Strings on the Left Side of the Ji

This playing technique involves a reverse hitting of the strings on the opposite side of the normal playing technique, which is on the left side of the Ji or in the area located between the Ji and the *Ungaku* (left end of a Koto).

This reverse playing technique also reverses the pitch of the string 1, which normally yields a low-pitched sound, to a high-pitched sound. Similarly, when this technique is applied to the normally high-pitched sound of string 13 the tone is reversed to a low-pitched sound. These changes are determined by the position of the Ji. In this playing technique both hands are used together to scrape upon or pluck the strings, especially when there is no *Tsume* on the fingers of the right hand. The ring finger of the right and the middle finger of the left hand are combined for continuous play of the strings.



Figure 9: Illustrates the placing of the left-hand's middle finger and the right-hand's small finger to play on the left hand side of the Ji.



Figure 10: Position for the technique of plucking outside the Ryugaku.

2.7 Plucking the Strings Outside the Ryugaku

This technique involves playing the strings just outside of the *Ryugaku* (the Koto's bridge) or to the right between it and the attachment holes of the strings. Players use the *Tsume* on the right-hand's middle finger to flick the strings toward the player in quick scratching motions from the high-pitched toward the low-pitched strings, producing sharp, high-pitched tones.

2.8 Hitting the Strings with a Wooden Stick to Create Certain Sounds

This technique was developed for new Koto performances and involves the hitting of strings with a small wooden rod. Sometimes this technique is applied to the playing of individual strings or applied simultaneously to many strings to produce the frightening "Pong" sounds. Additionally striking with a wooden stick can be used to keep the beat of the performance with the right hand. The wooden sticks used in this technique can range from a western-styled drumstick, to a pen, or a spoon.

Besides hitting the strings with a piece of wood, Koto players sometimes place the stick under just one of the strings, then strike the wooden shaft palm-down with their five fingers spread to generate vibrations at both ends of the wooden piece. The vibration is transferred to the adjacent strings that it touches, producing both long and high-frequency sounds. While the wooden piece is still vibrating and resonating the strings, the musician can play the strings at their normal positions as an accompaniment to these long and high frequency sounds.



Figure 11: Holding and hitting positions of the left hand. Figure 12: The left hand hitting the stick to initiate sympathetic vibrations in the strings.

2.9 Hitting the Koto Body with the Palms to Create Special Sounds

This technique involves striking the Koto body or back with the left or right hand. The resulting sound is comparable to that of striking a large, open wooden box with a drumstick.



Figure 13: Hitting the outermost edge of a Koto body next to the first string.

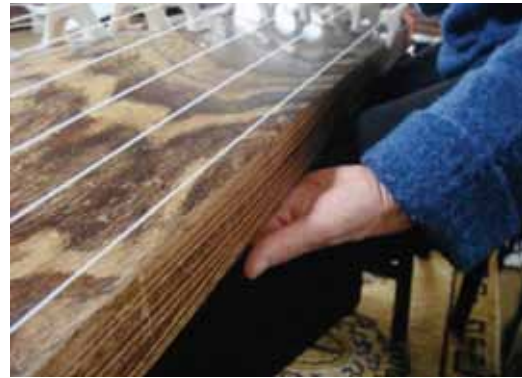


Figure 14: Hitting underneath the Koto body next to the player.

3. High Ratio of Left-hand Playing in the *Pizzicato* Technique

This study finds that the left-hand is utilized at a higher ratio in new Koto pieces. This means at times, its use is nearly equal. Such generous use of the left hand is known as the *Pizzicato* technique. The *Pizzicato* technique incorporates the use of the ring fingers of the right and left hands to flick the strings without a *Tsume* or plectrum.

4. Plucking the Strings with the *Tsume* and Fingers in the Same Melody System

Another unique feature of the new Koto music is the playing strings with the right hand's thumb and index finger simultaneously with the left hand's thumb and index finger using the same playing style of lifting strings upward to create sounds similar to those of a piano. The setting of tempo is relatively free with a fast tempo at the beginning of a melody set that slackens to slower tempo towards the ending of the same set.

5. *Harmonic* Plucking of Many Strings at the Same Time

Simultaneous application of the *Harmonic* technique to many strings is popular in the new Koto pieces. In *Tori no Yoni* as many as five strings are played together. Sometimes six strings are played as well, with the right-hand's index and middle fingers playing the same strings at the same positions.

6. *Playing with the Left and Right Hands in Two Different Melodies*

In the new Koto performances, composers have created and incorporated many innovative playing techniques that are very difficult to execute. Through the researcher's first-hand experiences in receiving formal training in the new Koto playing techniques, the author found that one such technique is a combination of the left and right hands playing simultaneously while in different melodies. Although the technique produces unusual, blended melodies, it remains very difficult to perform. The researcher has classified these playing techniques into two major styles as follows:

- Style 1** Playing the *Wari Zume* technique with the right hand and the *Pizzicato* technique with the left hand
- Style 2** Playing the *Tremolo* technique with the right hand and the *Harmonic* technique with the left hand
- Style 3** The right hand plays in the six-sound system while the left is in the four-sound system

7. Tempo Changes in Three New Performance Styles

The new contemporary Koto performances are distinguished from traditional Koto performances in three aspects:

First, a faster melody. It is widely known among the Koto circle, that new Koto performers play a much faster melody than in the past.

Second, there is a non-predetermined, freestyle element of the performances where the tempo accelerates from a slow to fast.

Third, there is a non-predetermined tempo acceleration from slow to fast, which unwinds to a slow tempo near the ending of the piece.

8. Alternating Light and Firm Hand Pressures

This is one of the very well-known characteristics of contemporary Koto music. There are two styles for this playing technique. In the first style, the same melody is played twice: In the first round it is played with firm hand pressure while the repeat is replayed with light hand pressure. For the second style the melody is played only once, but involves a lengthy, continuous performance incorporating alternating light and firm hand pressure.

9. Opera Singing Accompanied by the Koto

Nowadays opera singing is generally performed accompanied by the Koto. For example, *Kataoka Risa*, a teacher of Koto at the Osaka college of Music and at many other tertiary educational institutes, has been hailed as a New Koto master. *Kataoka Risa*, who was a student of *Miyagi Michio*, performed in a concert at the Millennium Hall, Osaka College of Music on 4 October 2008, during which he played the Koto as an accompaniment to a number of opera songs such as *Amazing Grace*, *Kosumosu*, *Haru no Umi*, *Ichikotsu*, and *Sen no Kaze Ninatte*.

Conclusion

From the above discussion of different aspects of Koto performance, it is apparent that throughout the years the Koto has undergone many developments and transformations as a result of major contributing factors such as the expansion of urban settlements, changes in the tuning technique, playing techniques (with and without a proper designation), innovative yet complicated left and right hand playing techniques, and the blending of Japanese and Western musical traditions that resulted in the Koto accompanying operas. Together these factors have been responsible for the introduction of the new forms of Koto music.

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The Historical Representations of Place in the Military base Town of Koza

The 'Reassessment' of U.S. Military Presence as a Developmental Resources

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Abstract

U.S. Military bases located in Okinawa Prefecture, Japan have caused various problems such as noise, accidents, crimes, and environmental damage. For military base towns, these problems have presented serious and long-term policy challenges. However, according to the 1996 final report of the Special Action Committee of Okinawa, substantial portions of several military bases are being “retuned” to Okinawa. In this new phase, issues of how to utilize the sites of bases and how to (re) develop areas around bases are emerging as new policy challenges for the pertinent towns. The author’s previous work (Yamazaki 2008), drawing on the political geographic theorization of ‘place’ by Agnew (1987), compared the developmental plans of three base towns and identified key elements to (re) developing these towns. One of the identified elements is the incorporation of town’s cultural uniqueness into development and the mobilization of ‘sense of place’ to encourage town residents to understand and actively participate in development. Following this work, this paper pays further attention to the mobilization of the sense of place in the Koza District

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of Okinawa City. Okinawa City attempts to systematically preserve and publically represent the postwar history of the district as a military base town and shows the possibility that the sense of place could be incorporated into redevelopment strategies. This paper explores how the memory and history of a military base town can be utilized as cultural resources to revitalize the District.

Keywords: *Developmental Resource, Representation, Place, Military Base Town, Koza*

Introduction

In this paper, I would like to illustrate how a civilian society adjacent to a U.S. military base attempts to make use of its own militarized history and culture as developmental resources under severe economic decline. According to recent arguments about cultural economy, politics, and governance (see Radcliffe and Laurie 2006), "culture" is often used as a last resort for disadvantaged societies without other available resources. Although it is not easy to define culture in such a context, it conceptually includes unique rituals, customs, histories, landscapes, and crafts that can be mobilized and commoditized to sustain disadvantaged societies. The society and culture I mention here are embedded in a specific geographical settings or a place, that is a civilian society adjacent to a U.S. military base or a "military base town." So this paper focuses on how a military base town represents its militarized culture and history to revitalize and redevelop its society.

U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa

For an examination of military base towns, Okinawa Prefecture in Japan offers an informative example (Figure 1). As a result of World War II, Japan allows a substantial amount of U.S. military troops to be stationed within its territory as a deterrent. 74% of the U.S. military bases in Japan are concentrated in Okinawa (Figure 2). Due to this concentration, many Okinawans have been suffering from military base problems such as accidents, noise, crimes, and a lack of usable lands caused by military bases. They have long desired the return of their lands occupied by the bases. The area of Okinawa Prefecture is only 0.6% of that of Japan. It is not difficult to imagine how densely concentrated U.S. military bases are on such tiny islands.

Besides, Okinawa's above-mentioned long-term hardship, Okinawa now faces new challenges. I call them post-"military base problems" (Yamazaki 2008). In 1996 Japan and the U.S. reached an agreement on the substantial return of military bases to Okinawa. Since then, military base towns have been working on how to develop sites of returned military bases or redevelop sites around unreturned military bases. In my previous study (*ibid.*), drawing on Agnew (1987), I identified three key elements for developing military base towns: the geopolitical/geo-strategic location of Okinawa, the local socio-economic conditions of each military base town, and a mobilization of place-based identity. Among them, this paper focuses on the third element: a mobilization of local culture and "placeness."



Figure 1: The location of Okinawa Prefecture.

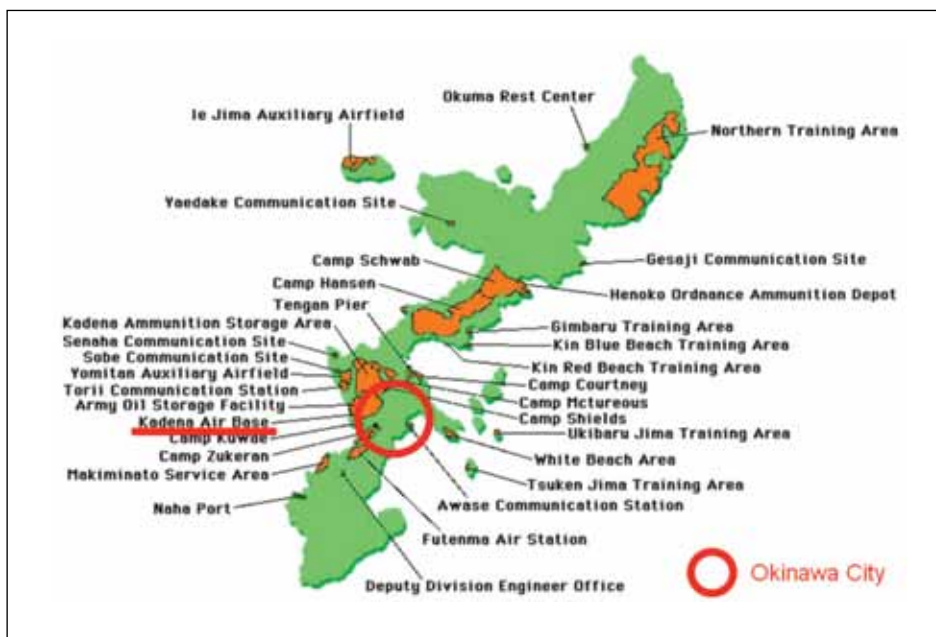


Figure 2: U.S. military bases and installations, 2004.
 Source: <http://www3.pref.okinawa.jp/site/view/contview.jsp?cateid=14&id=589&page=1>

Study Site, Research Questions, and Theoretical Frameworks

To explore the effect of mobilizing local culture and placeness on development of a military base town, I chose as a study site the Koza District (formerly Koza City) in Okinawa City adjacent to the Kadema Air Base or KAB. Koza is the most typical military base town in Japan that is suffering from a severe socio-economic decline

with little hope for the return of the KAB in the near future. However, Koza has a unique history and culture constructed through the militarization of the town. Koza (currently Okinawa) City is located in the Central District of Okinawa Island surrounded by the KAB and other U.S. military bases (Figure 2). Koza was formed in front of the KAB, which is one of the largest U.S. Air Force bases in the Far East with two two-kilometer runways.

Conducting a study on Koza, I have the following four research questions:

- What kind of resources does Koza have for its re-development?
- How can Koza mobilize its culture and “placeness” constructed through militarization?
- How does Koza represent its place-based history?
- What kind of effects does the representation have on the town and people?

As I mentioned before, there are few options left for redevelopment with Koza other than a mobilization of culture. So this paper examines how Koza, or stakeholders in Koza, can mobilize its culture and “placeness” constructed through militarization and how Koza represents its place-based history. I will explore the effects of such cultural politics in my future works.

Before moving on to the examination of Koza, I will explain some theoretical and conceptual frameworks of this paper. This paper draws much on the theorization of place and placeness in Human Geography (Tuan 1977, Entrikin 1991, Massey 1994). Place has been theorized and conceptualized in various ways in the discipline but generally defined as a subjective space that is specific and concrete and connected with lived experience or as constructed through the activities of people living in the place and closely connected with the formation of their individual and collective psychologies. Placeness indicates various characteristics of a place and is recognized as such.

Koza as a Place

I have found it quite useful to conceptualize Koza as a place. At the material and representational levels, Koza became a town inseparable from the military base and fostered a very unique placeness. At the material level, its militarized economy distinguished Koza from other places in Japan. After World War II, U.S. occupation forces constructed the KAB at the site of a Japanese military airport. The KAB attracted Okinawans freed from U.S. prisoner-of-war camps because it provided base-related job opportunities for landless Okinawans. Koza was spontaneously formed in front of Gate 2 of the KAB. It became a city in 1956 and prosperous during the Vietnam War in the 1960s. At the representational level, the name of Koza itself has its origin from the U.S. occupation. “Koza” is said to be a mis-description of a place name “Koja” by the U.S. military. The name of Koza was widely used even before Koza City was born. In Japan, Koza has become synonymous with a military base town. Several novels and movies were made to represent Koza as a military base town with its unique nature.

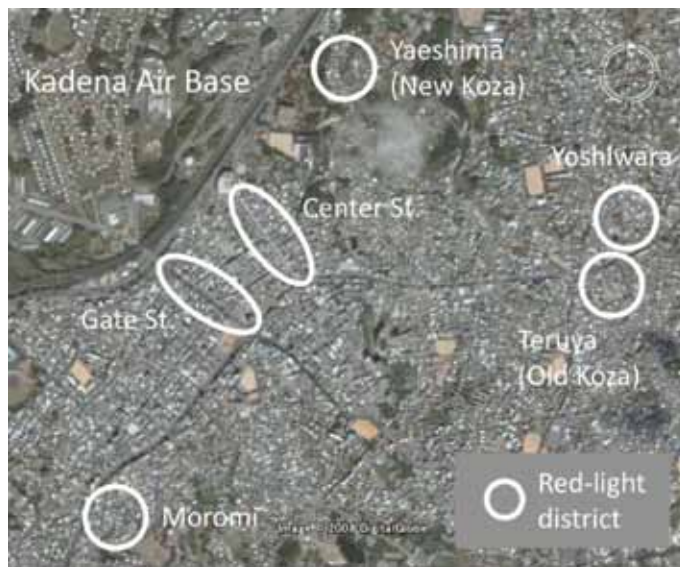


Figure 3: Red-light districts in pre-reversion Koza, Source: Google Earth®

Militarization usually manifests itself as a particular physical form or landscape. As the KAB was constructed, several red-light districts were formed in Koza (Figure 3). Most of the districts consisted of bars and restaurants patronized by U.S. military personnel. Names of district and establishments were often English. Many prostitutes from within Okinawa and other nearby islands worked in these districts. Among the districts, Centre Street, Gate Street, and Teruya or Old Koza flourished during the Vietnam War. The formation of the red-light districts created peculiarly Americanized urban landscapes which characterized Koza as a place (Figure 4).

Post-Reversion Urban Decline and Redevelopment of Local Resources

After the 27-year administration by the U.S. military, Okinawa reverted to Japan in 1972 with U.S. military bases remaining intact. The process of demilitarizing Koza began upon reversion. Koza made a declaration of “The City of International Culture and Tourism” as its new orientation. Koza was realigned into Okinawa City and attempted to get rid of its negative placeness as a military base town by renaming or Japanizing militarized place names: Koza City was renamed to Okinawa City; Gate Street to Kuko Street (*kuko* means airport, not air base, in Japanese); and Center Street to Chuo Park Avenue (*chuo* means center).

Due to the end of the Vietnam War and the rise of the yen after reversion, the size of the military base economy in Okinawa decreased and Koza began to suffer from suburbanization leading to a constant decline of Koza as the city center. Responding to this decline, Center Street was reconstructed and modernized as Chuo Park Avenue in 1985 but this project failed to stop decline. In 1997 a shopping complex “Korinza” was built at the northern end of the Avenue, but this project also failed. The Okinawa City government finally shifted its focus of redevelopment toward “local resources (*chiiki shigen*).” In 2007 a music theater and shopping complex “Koza Music Town” was built on former Gate Street. This is considered a core facility to develop local resources based on Koza’s militarized culture, which is

Americanized Okinawan music fostered in bars and clubs for U.S. personnel. As the facility was built, the City government officially reused the name of Koza for the facility and renamed Kuko Street to Koza Gate Street. Figure 5 is a photo of Koza Music Town on former Kuko Street. The street name is now shown as Koza Gate Street. I argue that changes such as these represent a re-appreciation of the militarized placeness of Koza.



Figure 4: Bars and restaurants on Gate Street in the early 1950s.
Source: Okinawa-shi (1997).



Figure 5: Koza Music Town and the restored street name (Koza Gate Street).

Under a severe economic decline and the limit of usable space in Koza, the Okinawa City government has shifted attention to Koza's placeness or militarized culture and history. They now attempt to reassess what U.S. military presence has brought about to Koza and what kind of implication it has for people in Koza. In reassessing the culture and history of Koza, the Editorial Division of the History of Okinawa City has been playing an important role. It has collected and published postwar historical materials since the 1990s. The books they have published represent Koza's unique placeness constructed through complex and uneven social, economic, and political relations between Okinawans and the U.S. military.

Historical Representation of Koza by Street Museums

Other than publication, the Editorial Division runs two street museums in the declined center of Koza according to Okinawa City's Master Plan and to reuse vacant stores. They are called "Histreet" which is a word coined from 'history' and 'street'. The name nicely represents "history on a street" or a combination of local history and place, suggesting that Koza's history is embedded in a street or place. Histreets are located on Parumira (Palmyrene) Street close to Chuo Park Avenue (former Center Street), which was once a symbol of militarized streets. The first Histreet was opened in 2005 with the entrance sign "NEW KOZA ST." This is a replica of the one put up at the entrance of Koza's first red-right district. (Figure 6).

Unlike the gorgeous prefecture and national museums in Okinawa, Histreet has free admission and is very accessible to local people as well as tourists. It exhibits many kinds of things and photos of incidents related to the postwar lives of people in Koza. There is no clear order in the exhibition so that visitors feel as if they were thrown into a toy box. But, local visitors can enjoy finding something they knew in the past. Therefore, this museum is often used for reminiscence therapy for the depressed elderly.



Figure 6: The façade of Histreet

The second Histreet (Histreet II) was opened in 2009. Its current exhibition is more specialized with photos and tools related to war and militarism. The representation of war and militarism is an important practice in the construction of Okinawan pacifist identity. For many Okinawans, World War II and the following long-term U.S. military administration still occupy a significant part of their memory and identity. So, the memory of people in Koza cannot be separated from such tragedies.

Representation of Local Memory, Symbolism, and Pride

The representation of local memory is not limited to the inside of Histreets. It is possible to find various representations of local memory, symbolism, and pride in Koza. An example of such a representation is the A-sign program, which was carried out from 1953-1972. The A-sign program was a licensing system for bars and restaurants patronized by U.S. military personnel and their families. To obtain an A-sign, Okinawan business owners needed to meet strict hygiene and construction requirements. Since there were a great number of A-sign establishments in Koza, older people in Koza often recall various, positive, and negative, memories from the sign. Although the program was a means to control and sanction Okinawan behaviors and values such as prostitution and a sense of sanitation, it significantly modernized or Americanized the built environment and business management in Koza. Therefore, for some local business owners, maintaining an A-sign was something to be proud of. Current symbolic use of an A-sign indicates a preservation of the memory of Koza.

Figure 7 shows A-signs that are represented in various ways in Koza. (a) Is the photo of A-signs put up in Histreet with a replica of a drinking bar and captions explaining their history. (b) Is a real A-sign exhibited in a former A-sign restaurant (Restaurant Lima). On the other hand (c) shows an A-sign on the door of a former A-sign restaurant (Charley's Tacos) on Chuo Park Avenue (former Center Street). This A-sign was not issued by the U.S. military but by the Okinawa A-sign Association after the reversion. The Association maintained a similar program to certify their business standard for U.S. military personnel. (d) Is a picture of A-sign bars on a street painted on the shutter of a drinking bar on Parumira Street. The name of the bar is Kozakura named after Koza. (e) Is a Thai restaurant (SomChai) on Parumira Street. It puts up a D-sign on the window, which is an award certificate for the contest "Dream Shop Grandprix" for ideas to reutilize vacant stores. Various representations of place-based memory can be seen in Koza.

Taken together, what Histreets are doing is to temporally and spatially re-contextualize people's lives and incidents in Koza rather than to de-contextualize them in a well-organized museum "out of place." For local residents, Histreets represent Koza in their memories while for tourists they function as a gateway to know Koza. In addition, Histreets are not simply toy boxes. The staff of Histreets employs fairly rigorous methodologies to collect and represent historical materials. Their exhibitions are not made up. In this sense, Histreets are reliable reference points of Koza's placeness for people inside and outside the place. In sum, Histreets and other shops representing place-based memories on streets can be important elements to mobilize place-based history, pride, and identity, and revitalize the declining city center.

Figure 7: Various representations of an A-sign in the Koza District.



(a) Histreet



(b) Restaurant Lima



(c) Charley's Tacos



(d) Kozakura



(e) SomChai



Conclusion

The author's involvement: Then what can I do for Koza as a political geographer? Based on my understanding and interpretation of the current difficult situation of Koza and in collaboration with the staff of Histreets, I am reexamining the postwar militarization of Koza by analyzing declassified military documents. My future works may shed new light on the relationship between Koza and the U.S. military. I am also conducting surveys on the preservation and reutilization of former A-sign establishments or militarized townscape. Rather than ethically judging militarisms inscribed in a place, I would like to explore how people living in a militarized place negotiate with their place-based memories for the future. Considering the current economic condition in which Koza is rapidly hollowing out and even physically disappearing, I feel that it is urgent to preserve and present the rich place-based history behind the A-sign for an effective revitalization of Koza.

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Conference Reports

- Report on the 8th Academic Forum, Bangkok, Thailand, March 2010
Pornprapit Phoasavadi (Thailand)
- Reflections on UNESCO 2nd World Conference on Arts Education, Seoul, South Korea, May 2010
Michele and Robert Root-Bernstein (USA)
- Rekindling the Torch: Report on the 29th International Society for Music Education (ISME) World Conference Beijing, China, August 2010
Kjell Skyllstad (Norway)
- Believing in Miracles: The Rebirth of a City, Report from Singapore World City Summit, June 2010
Kjell Skyllstad (Norway)

Report on the 8th Academic Forum

*Chulalongkorn University
Bangkok, Thailand March 2010*

Pornprapit Phoasavadi⁺ (Thailand)

The Journal of Urban Culture Research has its origin and is closely tied to the Academic Forum, which has been co-sponsored by the Urban Research Plaza (URP) at Osaka City University and its branch office at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.

This Academic Forum serves as a platform for young scholars, doctoral students, and practitioners in related fields of urban studies, performing arts, history, architecture, and the arts to present their research findings in relation to current issues and themes on urban culture research. In 2010, the 8th Academic Forum was hosted from March 9-10, 2010 at the Maha Chulalongkorn Building,



A scene from a modernized version of the Likay Thai folk drama performed by doctoral students from Chulalongkorn University's Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts

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Chulalongkorn University. The Forum's title "Empowering Urban Culture and Creativity: Art, PublicITY, and Transformation" represented the diverse range of topics unveiled and was very special for many reasons.

After first extending a warm welcome to the twenty presenters and approximately two hundred attendees from North America, Europe, and Asia, the Forum provided an important venue in which to examine the directions of the developing cultural network in both the public and private sectors. Secondly, the Forum had the former Mayor of Bangkok and a current advisor to Thailand's Prime Minister, Mr. Apirak Kosayodhin as the keynote speaker. His speech helped broaden the audience's perspective of Bangkok as a creative city as the Thai government has transformed this idea into a key concept to provide an economic catalyst for better urban living conditions and quality of life. As a member of URP, the Bangkok branch office continues to extend its projects into the directions of important social inclusion issues and empowering urban culture through the arts in Thailand.



Mr. Apirak Kosayodhin, former Mayor of Bangkok giving the keynote speech



Professor Shin Nakagawa, Director of Urban Research Plaza (URP) giving the closing speech at the forum

Reflections on UNESCO 2nd World Conference on Arts Education

Seoul, South Korea, May 2010

Michele⁺ and Robert⁺⁺ Root-Bernstein (USA)

We will always remember the UNESCO 2nd World Conference on Arts Education held in Seoul, Korea as a wonderful and stimulating experience, both professionally and personally. It was a great privilege for us to participate in such a dynamic forward-looking event and to meet leaders of arts education from around the world. Moreover it was such a joy to hear, see, smell, taste, and otherwise explore Korean arts and crafts. We cannot say enough to commend both the host organization and the host nation for putting together an outstanding event.

The stated focus of the conference was to build on the work of the First World Conference on Arts Education (Lisbon, 2006) and particularly on its main outcome, the Road Map for Arts Education. The road map advised member nations of UNESCO to explore two intertwined themes that became the focus of the 2nd World Conference that we attended: “Arts for Society, Education for Creativity.” The conference developed several UNESCO goals. One was the International

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Appeal for the Promotion of Arts Education and Creativity at School, approved by UNESCO's General Conference in 1999. A second was to explore world peace through arts as a part of the 2010 International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures.

Over 2000 state officials, scholars, teaching artists, and activists attended the UNESCO Conference, hailing from 129 (out of 193) member countries. Those we spoke to and listened to all agreed that arts education is beleaguered around the world, its value misunderstood or altogether denied. How to change that situation and what ideas and evidence to bring to bear in doing so have, however, generated many different responses. Since different nations face different challenges, supporting and sustaining the arts through arts education necessarily involves many different concerns and objectives.

As we absorbed purposes and points of view, we realized that conversations were occurring at two different levels of discourse. There were the nominal issues of the conference, explicitly addressed in talks and discussion panels, and there were the sub-rosa issues, implicitly expressed in the assumptions and attitudes of participants. What was said and what was left unsaid formed intellectual gaps that reflected other gaps, real and perceived, between developing and developed nations, between traditional and global cultures, between art, on the one hand, and science and technology, on the other.

To a large extent, participants addressed one of three points. The use of arts education to preserve traditional and ethnic cultures and foster global appreciation of their global diversity. The use of arts education to heal communities in crises and promote socio-political multi-culturalism, and the use of arts education to foster creativity for 21st century needs. Very few speakers or panels attempted to grapple with all three issues or probe their intersections. We were among them. We frankly had not expected or understood the depth of the fragmentation we observed, and did not adequately address it in our opening keynote speech. We get the chance now to take a closer look at some of these inadvertent gaps and silences.

We will look in this report at the gap between the first and last issue, between tradition on the one hand and innovation on the other. For many speakers and many participants, perhaps the majority, arts education was understood as a primary means of preserving indigenous or traditional cultures and protecting them against an assault of cultural homogenization being carried out by media giants, often American, which are overwhelming the world with a particular Westernized concept of what the arts are and what social functions they should perform. Lee Dae – Yong, President of the Korea Arts and Culture Education Service made this point for his nation and for many others when he said: "Korea must continue to work to bring back its lost spirit of culture and arts that have gone missing temporarily during the area of industrialization, democracy, and IT" (information technology).

We appreciate and value the role for arts education and not only for the preservation of the unique ways of being in the world. To our mind, the preservation of traditional cultures actually intersects with arts education as means of fostering creativity. Consider that the global culture purveyed by the West is highly commercial and consumerist in contrast to the highly participatory nature of most indigenous arts. This is a very important point for us, because those who make their own arts, as most people in traditional societies do, are inherently not only creating their own culture, but are learning and participating in the creative process on a daily basis. Consumer arts, in contrast, place this kind of everyday creativity in the hands of a few elite individuals at work with corporations, which then sell those arts to the rest of society. The upshot, unfortunately, is that those who consume culture without participating in its creation become divorced from understanding the creative process.

For us, therefore, participatory arts and the understanding of creative processes go hand in hand. Moreover where the arts become nothing but a consumer product, it loses not only its intrinsic value, but also the imaginative and creative capacities that drive innovation in and beyond the arts. In countries such as Korea, where “creativity” is seen as the key to driving the economy, we believe that traditional arts within arts education may very well play a vital role in maintaining and developing that manifold imagination.

Notes

Michele and Robert Root-Bernstein were keynote speakers at the UNESCO 2nd World Conference on Arts Education. They are co-authors of the book *Sparks of Genius: The 13 Thinking Tools of the World’s Most Creative People* (Houghton Mifflin, 1999). This is the first of a series of reflections on the UNESCO 2nd World Conference on Arts Education that appeared as blogs on the Psychology Today website and are published here with the express consent of the authors.

For a full discussion see

www.psychologytoday.com/blog/imagine/201006/reflections-unesco-s-2nd-world-conference-arts-education-seoul-korea

The full keynote speech can be downloaded at

www.unesco.org/culture/en/artseducation/pdf/fullpresentationrootbernstein

Rekindling the Torch:

*Report on the 29th International Society
for Music Education (ISME) World
Conference Beijing, China, August 2010*

Kjell Skjellstad⁺ (Norway)

When the city of Beijing in 2008 invited the world community of music educators to assemble in the Olympic compound for the 2010 World Conference of the International Society for Music Education we were again forcefully reminded that arts competitions had been part and parcel of the program for the Olympic games in antiquity. It seemed to many delegates that choosing the China National Convention Center located right in the heart of the Olympic city as the conference venue two years after the Beijing games was a symbolic act of rekindling the torch and passing it on to the community of devoted music educators, which will in two years, again assemble in the Olympic heartland of Greece.

And so it was that a capacity audience of an estimated 7000 music educators and performers from around the world filled the Plenary Hall of the CNCC on Sunday Aug. 1st for the opening concert honoring the conference motto “Harmony and the World Future”. The organizing hosts took us on a breathtaking musical journey along the Silk Road portrayed by music and dance ensembles from China, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan and India. Through the impressive performances, not least by the Uyghur Xinjang Muqam Art Group, the King Kong Dancing Team, and the Tongtianhe Folk Art Group of Chengduo County in the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province, the message got across that harmony in our world’s future must be built on the respect for cultural diversity. And moreover the music community here in China as in many other countries, leads the way and sets an example for other sectors to follow.

⁺ Dr. Kjell Skjellstad, Professor Emeritus, University of Oslo, Department of Musicology, Norway

This was the start of a four day program packed with paper presentations, workshops, demonstrations, symposia and round tables, and not least an impressive array of concerts.

The big strides made by China in the field of music education was demonstrated by the large attendance of music educators from all regions of the Republic, an impressive exposition of music literature and instruments, and not least the high standards of music performances in all genres demonstrated by the Chinese ensembles.

A special concert was devoted to a performance of the court music traditions of the Tang dynasty recognized by the UN Intangible Cultural Heritage Project that was re-constructed and restored in a unique cooperative undertaking with Taiwanese musicologists.

So in this last year of the United Nations Decade for A Culture of Peace, the torch has been re-lighted and will be carried on to the next ISME World Conference in Thessaloniki, 2012 by an international community of engaged and devoted music educators convinced of the power of music to uplift, inspire, and pave the way for a more peaceful future.

Believing in Miracles:

The Rebirth of a City, Report from Singapore World City Summit, June 2010

Kjell Skyllstad⁺ (Norway)

Do you believe in miracles? The Mayor of the City of Bilbao, Inaki Azkuna, is in Singapore to receive the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize, also called the “Nobel prize” for cities. And now before an audience of a thousand city planners, mayors, ministers and urban researchers he poses this challenging question. And with good reason, because how else could the rebirth of a city like Bilbao be described other than as a miracle and an overwhelming one at that?

And then he goes on telling the incredible story of a city rising like a bird Phoenix from the ruins. The disastrous decline of the formerly thriving industrial town due to market downturns had led to an equally serious social crisis. The Mayor explains: we had a devastated region, our industry falling to pieces due to falling steel prices, and then in 1983 came the devastating flood that hit our old town and left dozens dead. The outlook for the future could not have been more bleak and hopeless.

And then the miracle happened. A stroke of fate? A product of chance? The Guggenheim Foundation was looking for a venue to build a museum for contemporary art in Europe. Paris and Salzburg had been contacted, but were not ready to respond to the challenge. So here is where the Mayor saw their chance. They built a museum in the middle of a crisis, with a ruined economy! And the Mayor raises his voice: In times of crises it is time to invest! He could have added, It is time to invest in culture and the arts. But everybody got the point, although it probably went against the commonly accepted principles of economic and urban management theory.

And here the Mayor turns to telling the success story of a city reborn, the story of a reinvented and regenerated city, a model of inclusive urban development, and of the complete change of heart of the media and trade unions from resistance

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to enthusiastic cooperation. And at the inception and center of it all was The Guggenheim Museum. One of the most audacious city projects of our times was paid for within three years.

By now our readers might have been led to think that this major conference on urban development would center on the space for the arts in city regeneration and development. Although the inclusive conference theme was Livable & Sustainable Cities for the Future, other basic issues were on the agenda at the World Cities Summit 2010. At the top of this agenda was the immediate challenge of providing a safe and adequate water supply to the rapidly growing city populations around the world.

To cite a few figures:

According to United Nations' estimates the proportion of the world's population living in the cities will rise from today's 50 percent to 70 percent by 2030. Every week sees more than a million people moving into the cities. Ninety percent of future population growth is likely to be concentrated in the cities. Asia alone will host 63 percent of the world's population of 8.3 billion people. With the present, worldwide population of close to 1 billion people who have no access to safe drinking water and 2.4 billion people without access to any type of improved sanitation, close to 10 percent of diseases globally are attributable to poor sanitation and unsafe water.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goal (MDG) is to halve the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015.

The immediate challenges of meeting this goal formed the backdrop for the synchronization of the World City Summit with Singapore's Water Week, which constituted the unique dual framework initiated by the organizers. First and foremost was the Centre for Livable Cities with its Director Edwin Seah. This ingenious conference structure - an innovative and timely model for interdisciplinary cooperation, laid the foundation for city planners to enter into a fruitful debate with environmentalists on the issues that need immediate attention. Equally ingenious was the conference structure with Plenaries, Expert panel sessions, Mayors' Forum, Ministerial Dialogues, and not least, the Learning Tours affording an on-site insight into the latest development of the host city - Singapore that proudly features key achievements in design, public housing, waste and resource management, urban biodiversity conservation, and marine aquaculture.

Singapore's action plan 2000 - 2012 includes reducing CO₂ emissions by 15 percent, promoting the use of renewable energy, improving the efficiency in use of applications, improving solid waste management (recycling and conversion to energy) and the expansion of the park system. Already Singapore is a city in a garden having in the span of a few years, expanded its greenery space from 36 percent to 47 percent in spite of a population growth from 2.7 million to 4.6 million.



Figure 1: Sculpture, Brasilia (Singapore World City Summit 2010)

The enormous challenges facing us call for concerted action by all individuals and all sectors of society. And here is where the inventiveness and the social commitment by artists, art educators and researchers will be needed. Bilbao has shown that art and culture can be decisive motors in urban development. At one of the conference sessions the Director of the Edinburgh Festival, Jonathan Mills, tells a similar story of design driven (as opposed to engineering driven) city development.

In 1947 as the city of Edinburgh was coping in the aftermath of the Second World War, the city fathers took the courageous decision to establish a festival that would “embrace the world.” The festival was seen as a new opportunity to enlist the cooperation of all of its citizens in building on the wartime experience of community engagement and channeling it into an effort to remake the city. People of all walks of life opened their homes for festival visitors (the editor being one of those that enjoyed the hospitality of a city family). Today the festival yearly welcomes 950,000 festival guests, buying a total of 3 million tickets to the artistic events of 9 festival sections.



Figure 2: Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (Singapore World City Summit 2010)

One of the most important aspects of the Edinburgh festival is giving its citizens and visitors alike a sense of place. Mills calls it “Sensing a city.” It is all about retaining and renewing a sense of belonging, a sense of identity – a design for a multisensory living and sustainable environment – an indispensable element in city livability. And I would add a sense of cultural continuity. A city needs a past, present and a future. It is the privilege of the arts to make this connection. City development is not only about the future. It is also about rediscovering our roots. Music, dance, sculpture and painting make this integrative development possible. Let us look forward to the 2012 World City Summit with the hope of participating in an agenda for a new exploration of an art driven, sustainable urban development.



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The Journal of Urban Culture Research (JUCR) is an international, online, peer-reviewed journal published annually by the Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts of Thailand's Chulalongkorn University in conjunction with the Urban Research Plaza of Osaka City University, Osaka, Japan.

JUCR is intended to address topics that, while focusing on research and knowledge of fine and applied arts, also offer readers relevant theoretical discussions and act as a catalyst for expanding the knowledge-base in specific areas of fine and applied arts to Southeast Asia's urban culture. This first volume of the Journal of Urban Culture Research aims at bringing together researchers and cultural practitioners to identify and share innovative and creative experiences in establishing sustainable and vibrant communities.

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