

## **From the Editors**

### **Samuel Lamontagne and Tyler Yamin**

Welcome to Volume 22, issue 2 of *Ethnomusicology Review*! We open with a timely invited essay by Rachel Mundy, which examines the presence of a musical zoopolitics in the popular considerations of mortality precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Mundy takes aim at the fact that represented in such mortality calculations is the statistical probability of one's survival, a quantification of factors directly linked to age, race, gender, place, and nationality that imbue each with an implicit degree of disposability. Bringing together inquiries into biopolitics and animal studies, Mundy reminds us that the category of humanity itself has always been constituted through an analogous evaluation of relative difference, in this case against the "animal." By raising the prospect of the "animanities"—a contradiction by any anthropocentric measure—Mundy shows that taking seriously musical practices beyond the human can be a productive inroad into deconstructing normative notions of "life," along with its capacity for expendability baked right into what we understand to be moral behavior.

Next, we feature two peer reviewed articles, both of which, in an earlier conference paper form, were recognized with the best graduate student paper prize from each author's local chapter of the Society for Ethnomusicology in 2018 (Nelson: T. Temple Tuttle Paper Prize, SEM Niagara Chapter; Hsu: Vida Chenoweth Prize, SEM Southern Plains Chapter). "Butterfly in Bombay," the article by Trevor R. Nelson, focuses on opera in India during the British Raj. By examining opera, a musical practice often neglected in the context of colonial India, the article explores the relations between the cultural life of the metropole and identity formation amongst British settlers. Building on archival material, Nelson reconstructs the operatic life of Bombay from 1860 to the 1930s and further questions its roles and implications on the British imperial imagination.

In "Sounding Paiwan," Chia-Hao Hsu unpacks the politics of institutionalization and aestheticization surrounding the nose and mouth flutes (*lalingedan* and *pakulalu*, respectively) belonging to the Paiwan indigenous group of Taiwan. Examining the consequences of this endangered tradition's academic documentation and representation, Hsu argues that such research was far from neutral; rather, it places Paiwanese actors "in a feedback loop with academic publications and popular discourse, which in turn affect the way Indigenous musicians conceptualize their music" (139–140). The result, he shows, is

the aesthetic coding of the instruments with the affective state of weeping, what he calls “thoughtful sorrow.”

Translated from French, Matthieu Saladin’s contribution explores artist Max Neuhaus’ drawing practices to represent and reason with sound throughout his various installations. Detailing the different types of drawing practices used by Neuhaus to accomplish different purposes, Saladin examines how drawing has been a privileged medium for the artist to think about sound in space, to articulate the visual with the sonic, but also to question the audience’s experience within the space of his sound installations. Saladin then shows how drawing was a way for Neuhaus to reflect on his art as well as was a tool to further explore creation.

Concluding the issue on an opening, the final contribution is the introduction from the book *Neva Again: Hip Hop Art, Activism and Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa* edited by Adam Haupt, Quentin Williams, H. Samy Alim, and Emile Jansen (2019). Beyond presenting the book as a whole, the introduction problematizes the political dimension of Hip Hop expression in South Africa, and further, addresses the key notions and approaches used to contextualize hip hop culture in relation to the political history of South Africa and its socio-cultural dynamics. By re-publishing the introduction of *Neva Again*, we hope to contribute to the circulation of this important work on South African hip hop culture and history. Special thanks to H. Samy Alim for making it possible.

We are proud that we are able to offer not only a second issue in a single calendar year (the first in the history of this journal), but further that our current collection of essays speaks directly to ethnomusicology’s current moment of reckoning with its disciplinary history. The pieces included in this volume each challenge unique dimensions of ethnomusicology’s epistemological and methodological status quo. From an examination of music’s potential to aid in both the reproduction and deconstruction of anthropocentricity, to a historical reading of the imperial archive, to a cautionary tale of preservationist research’s transformative impact on its object, to a study of the use of visual techniques to conceptualize the sonic, to an argument for South African Hip Hop’s generative potential—each essay, in its own way, gestures towards alternative manners of conducting music studies in which urgent questions regarding who, what, and how have not been decided in advance. We hope you find our offerings as inspiring and thought-provoking as we do, and further welcome you to participate in these discussions through our online format, which makes it possible to provide public comments on individual articles.

## **Life, Death, and Humanistic Comparison**

**Rachel Mundy**

Death is everywhere and nowhere. Counting death has become a national pastime as the number of COVID-19 related deaths in the United States climb past 200,000, 250,000 and upwards on the daily news feeds. For some these are personal and specific deaths. But for many, they are data, quantifications that signify not only death but the likelihood of survival.<sup>1</sup> The latter is a comparative project, in which death and the chance of survival are measured according to age, race, nation, gender, even occupation. Are there more deaths in the United States in 2020 than there were in 2018?<sup>2</sup> Do more men than women die of the virus?<sup>3</sup> Is the per capita death rate higher in Sweden or in South Korea?<sup>4</sup> What is the mortality rate of the disease for Americans age 25-34?<sup>5</sup> How do COVID deaths break down by race?<sup>6</sup> What percentage of total COVID-19 deaths occur in nursing homes?<sup>7</sup> And an old calculation, renewed in this context: do more blacks than whites die per capita at the hands of police?<sup>8</sup>

How did death come to be understood in these comparative terms of survival as a measurement of age, race, gender, place, and nationality? I want to think in this essay about the very beginnings of this question, where notions of identity and difference become entangled with the quantification of life and death. And I want to introduce into this thought the seemingly unrelated topic of animal musicality. At first glance animal music seems to have nothing to do with the quantification of mortality that suffuses our present life. Music scholars are surely more likely to associate animal music with the strange doings of Murray Schafer or with YouTube videos of cats. But since the late nineteenth century, debates about the songs of animals and marginalized human voices have been used to refine broad notions of identity that continue to inform categories of difference such as species, race, gender, and nation. These are, of course, the same categories by which we measure who is likely to live, and who to die, today.

In this essay, I want to raise the possibility that the particular way we calculate mortality is connected to the particular way we calculate identity, and to the ethics that circulate through that broader practice of identifying difference. Studies of animal music from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are only one small part of the history that made those calculations of difference what they are today. But they reveal a practice of connecting the visible world of quantification to invisible sonic evidence based on categorical measures of difference, human and otherwise. Those categories, however, do

not allow for a meaningful measure of survival, life, and death in a world that transgresses imagined boundaries of nature, nation, gender, race, class, and place. I write this, then, in the hope of opening up new conversations about death, life, and survival that are suited to the changing realities of the twenty-first century.

My approach to these questions may seem at first like a call for posthumanism. Posthumanism has shaped my work in profound ways, and I look forward to participating in ongoing conversations like those from the fall issue of this journal. In this essay, however, I am not so much advocating for posthumanism as I am trying to locate it within the broader heritage of twentieth-century thought that we carry forward today in discussions about life and death. The post-human and the multi-species are framed through an exceptional category of species that, in Western cultural contexts, has been cocreated with broad notions of human identity, race, gender, sexuality, nation, and other forms of difference (Wynter 2003, Dayan 2018, Mundy 2018, Jackson 2020). What does this cocreation mean? What are we to do with the fact that to talk about species is to talk about otherness, race, gender, and difference? With the intertwined fact that to talk about these forms of difference is part of long and ongoing conversations about evolution and comparative development? With the fact that to talk about the posthuman, in this context, is to deploy a familiar academic currency of intellectual development, of post-ness, of progress, that derives from older versions of those same evolutionary narratives? And what does it mean when we try to untangle the relationship between such terms and a concept like life?

Let me step back from these many questions in order to address one of the most important words in this essay, “life.” What do I mean by this word? This is a word we all use comfortably, even though, like most words, we know it has its limits. Since the early twentieth century, viruses like the coronavirus have been used to teach biology students those limits from a medical perspective, by exploring the virus’s partial fulfillment of the scientific criteria for life.<sup>9</sup> That medical awareness of life’s limits draws on much older debates about life that have intrigued philosophers, scientists, and theologians since the rise of humanism in the 1600s.

When scholars in the humanities address “life,” however, they are often referring not to medicine or theology, but to a tradition of political and cultural research that dates from Michel Foucault’s theorization of biopolitics in the late 1970s (Foucault 2008). Drawing on this foundation, “life” can mean Giorgio Agamben’s “bare life” of the 1990s, Achille Mbembe’s “necropolitics” of the early 2000s, or Judith Butler’s more recent “grievable”

life of the 2010s (Agamben 1998, Mbembe 2003, Butler 2015). After the turn in critical philosophy towards posthumanism and new materialism in the late 1990s, authors such as Jane Bennett, Mel Chen, Clare Colebrook, Elizabeth Povinelli, and others developed related ideas to ask whether Western valuations of “life” in a strictly human biopolitical context are enough to account for nonhuman agency in a post-climate change context (Bennett 2009, Chen 2012, Colebrook 2014, Povinelli 2016).

A parallel but distinct discourse threads its way through animal studies and critical race studies to place one of the central elements of this biopolitical critique into its own context: human identity. Wide-ranging intellectuals such as Bénédicte Boisseron, Colin Dayan, Zakkiyah Iman Jackson, Claire Kim, Eduardo Kohn, and Sylvia Wynter have argued since the early 2000s that measures of human identity are implicitly exclusionary, claiming that humanity is defined against and through comparisons with nonhuman animals and non-white, non-Western human subjects, particularly through representations of blackness (Wynter 2003, Kohn 2013, Kim 2015, Boisseron 2018, Dayan 2018, Jackson 2020). Many of these authors also make the point that artists and creative figures such as Octavia Butler or Patricia Piccinini have preceded scholarly research by several decades with stories and images of hybrid beings whose existence contravenes the centrality of the Western “human” ideal (Butler 1987, Piccinini 2002).

To put these two ideas together, recent posthumanist critique argues that Western valuations of life fail to account for nonhuman agency in an era of climate change. Recent critiques within race and animal studies argue that both human life and nonhuman agency are based on the implicit disposability of non-white, non-Western, and nonhuman lives. Taken together, these two lines of thought beg the question of what, exactly, measures of human mortality mean during a global pandemic if they are defined by a system in which the quantification of death can’t be fully separated from animals, from colonial history, or from racial politics. And what, in turn, do measures of species extinction mean at the dawn of a global ecological crisis if they, too, are inseparable from this particular idea of human life that is already entangled with animals, with colonial subjects, and with other Others?

This is where I return to the seemingly unrelated sphere of animal musicality. Music is one of many points of entry to these questions, and it has its own pathways. Since Donna Haraway’s work of the 1980s, animal studies scholars have shown how the visual and textual comparison of animals’ bodies ordered the Western world in a “natural” history

that extended to gendered and racialized human bodies in the early twentieth century (Haraway 1989). As I have shown in my own work, and as many ethnomusicologists are already aware, these practices had parallels in studies of music, where sonic “specimens” were used to compare thousands of folk songs, “primitive” tunes, and animal vocalizations to determine the relative evolution of nonhuman, non-white, and European performers.<sup>10</sup> One could say that comparative musicology of the early twentieth century was about hearing, defining, and comparing musical identity and difference. Sound’s unique contribution to this discourse was its claim to reveal hidden, inner truths that could be heard but not seen through rigorous quantification. And the language that framed this work was one of musical extinction and endangerment, making explicit the perceived connections between cultural, environmental, and biological crises.

This approach was revised many times during the twentieth century, most notably in music during the 1980s under the rubric of the “new musicology.” That movement could be described as an attempt to recuperate the rights and worth of those marginalized human subjects who were imagined through categories of difference in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In that recuperative work, scholars redefined the role that categories of identity and difference played in music studies. Instead of a category of comparison, identity served as a category of critical analysis, one that clarified important social and political contexts. That shift, however, retained humanism’s core value of human life, including the dyad of difference/identity and its underlying relationship with beliefs about who is, and is not, fully human. The methods of musical study remained, in that sense, tools designed to clarify difference, discover inner truths, and prevent the extinction of endangered cultures.

Those tools serve many uses, but they do not speak of death in ways that address either my experience of a global pandemic, or my understanding of ecological crisis. In both of those cases, statistical death is used as a way to gauge individual survival as a factor of one’s identity category. This is occurring today in a context where traditional notions of Western individuality have proved an ineffective response to global challenges. This seems all the more significant if, as recent work in posthumanism and animal studies suggests, our notion of individuality is about humanistic ideals that can’t be separated from broader histories of difference, leaving the calculation of one’s individual chances of survival entangled with questions about race, gender, nation, and even species.

What does all this have to do with ethics, a word I included in the first paragraphs of this essay? At the end of my last book, I imagined a field of study called the “animanities”

that disentangled these histories of life in part to lay the groundwork for a related history of modern ethics. I argued there that the models of ethics that we inherit in a modern Western context are just as entangled with life as humanity is with difference. Just as human identity and animality served as a ground upon which expansive notions of difference were co-created in the late nineteenth century such that race, gender, nation, sexuality, and species were comparable terms, I suspect that modern life and ethics have co-created one another on the same ground. Thus, to untangle or deconstruct “life” and its disposability in this moment is to confront the ways in which modern ethics are contingent upon that notion of life.

This isn’t about the essential character of moral behavior, but about the heritage of history that structures what we ask moral behavior to do. I don’t yet know what that heritage is, nor the structures that it provides. But one of them, surely, is the quantification of mortality that so consumes our present moment. And just as surely, life and death are far more, for many people, than a measure of their chances of survival. Music is not at the center of this question; but it offers potential answers, particularly because of its longstanding association with the invisible world—the world in which ethics is traditionally understood to operate.

This is, as I wrote before, just a question, just a beginning. But I hope that asking after the connections between death, ethics, and the quantification of difference raises questions that will be useful for music scholars in a century driven by changing responses to globalization, environmental crisis, and norms of inclusion. I’m at the beginning of these questions myself, and this essay is speculative in character. But I hope that it inspires new ideas and questions about life and death in that work that we call “the humanities.”

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> For whom are these numbers intended? In media coverage, they are intertwined with both public health and politics [see, for example, <https://www.businessinsider.com/trump-boasts-about-misleading-coronavirus-fatality-rate-in-us-2020-7>; <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/07/politics/trump-coronavirus-death-rate-lowest-fact-check/index.html>; accessed 8-14-20).] But this public discourse extends to work and home, at least in my life, where I receive work-related email announcements about the mortality rates’ impact on our unusually diverse student population, and where discussions with friends and family about our various social distancing norms are often grounded in information about

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mortality numbers, mortality rates, and assessments of survival but not, interestingly, in the prospect of illness.

<sup>2</sup> In May of 2020, charts circulated on social media in the United States comparing CDC mortality counts in the US from 2018 and 2020 to suggest that COVID-19 was being misrepresented by mainstream media as more deadly than the annual flu. I learned about this claim from a friend at my gym, who was concerned that I was overly worried about COVID. The comparison has been corrected since then; but it's the comparative character of the question that interests me here. [<https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-factcheck-death-count-stable-idUSKBN22Q2MT>, accessed 8-11-2020]

<sup>3</sup> Many early calculations suggest that men do indeed have a higher mortality rate, but the reasons remain unclear. [see, for example, <https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/why-are-more-men-dying-from-covid-19-than-women/>; <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/up-front/2020/05/15/covid-19-much-more-fatal-for-men-especially-taking-age-into-account/>, accessed 8-11-20]

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, <https://coronavirus.medium.com/sweden-vs-south-korea-38acc2b653c8> (accessed 8-11-20)

<sup>5</sup> For example, <https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2020-05-07/comparing-coronavirus-deaths-by-age-with-flu-driving-fatalities> (accessed 8-11-20)

<sup>6</sup> For example, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html> (accessed 8-11-20)

<sup>7</sup> For example, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/coronavirus-nursing-homes.html>; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/theapothecary/2020/05/26/nursing-homes-assisted-living-facilities-0-6-of-the-u-s-population-43-of-u-s-covid-19-deaths/#293a10de74cd> (accessed 8-11-2020)

<sup>8</sup> <https://fatalencounters.org>; <https://news.northeastern.edu/2020/07/16/the-research-is-clear-white-people-are-not-more-likely-than-black-people-to-be-killed-by-police/>; <https://nypost.com/2020/07/14/trump-more-white-people-are-killed-by-police-than-african-americans/> (accessed 8-11-2020)

<sup>9</sup> In 1961, Wendell Stanley, whose work on viruses set the stage for this half-life narrative, wrote, "The virus is one of the great riddles of biology. Whether it is "alive" or not is debatable, for it seems to occupy a place midway between the inert chemical molecule and the living organism," [Stanley and Valens 1961:8]. His words are echoed in modern introductory textbooks that frame the virus as a "borrowed life" that exists between the definitions of living and nonliving things [see chapter 19 in Urry, Cain, Wasserman, Minorsky and Reece 2016].

<sup>10</sup> I've written about this extensively in my own work (Mundy 2018, 2014). There are other excellent sources besides my own, which include Ames 2003, Brady 1999, Kheshti 2015, Ochoa 2014, and Zon 2017.



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## **Sounding Paiwan: Institutionalization and Heritage-Making of Paiwan *Lalingedan* and *Pakulalu* Flutes in Contemporary Taiwan**

**Chia-Hao Hsu**

*Lalingedan ni vuvu namaya tua qaun*  
*Lalingedan ni vuvu namaya tua luseq.....*  
*Lalingedan sini pu'eljan nu talimuzav a'uvarun*  
*Lalingedan nulemangeda'en mapaqenetje tua saluveljengen*

The ancestor's nose flute is like weeping.  
The ancestor's nose flute is like tears...  
When I am depressed, the sound of the nose flute becomes a sign of sorrow.  
When I hear the sound of the nose flute, I always have my lover in mind.

—Sauniaw Tjuveljevelj, from the song “*Lalingedan ni vuvu*,”  
in the album *Nasi*<sup>1</sup>

In 2011, the Taiwanese government's Council for Cultural Affairs declared Indigenous Paiwan *lalingedan* (nose flutes) and *pakulalu* (mouth flutes) to be National Important Traditional Arts.<sup>2</sup> Sauniaw Tjuveljevelj, a designated preserver of Paiwan nose and mouth flutes at the county level, released her first album *Nasi* in 2007, which included one of her Paiwan songs “*Lalingedan ni vuvu*” [“The Ancestor's Nose Flute”]. Using both nose flute playing and singing in Paiwan language, the song shows her effort to accentuate her Paiwan roots by connecting with her ancestors via the nose flute. The lines of the song mentioned above reflect how prominent cultural discourses in Taiwan depict the instruments today; the sound of Paiwan flutes (hereafter referred to collectively as Paiwan flutes) resembles the sound of weeping, which is a voice that evokes a sense of ancestral past and “thoughtful sorrow.”

However, the music of Paiwan flutes was rarely labeled as sorrowful in literature before the mid-1990s. Since both instruments had all the hallmarks of an endangered tradition by the second half of the twentieth century, when and how did the sonic character of Paiwan flutes become aesthetically coded with this particular sense of “thoughtful sorrow”? How does this transformation contribute to the process of national cultural production? Understanding the process of institutionalization as an “ideological prerequisite,” this article focuses on how the large-scale music investigations conducted

by anthropologists and ethnomusicologists in the 1990s articulated the relationship between the instruments, their related aesthetic experience, and an “ideal” Paiwan sound. This research is based on fieldwork I undertook in Taiwan in 2016–17 and 2018, including extensive time spent observing a number of acts of transmission of Paiwan flutes, such as performances, and local community events, 17 interviews with domestic scholars and Indigenous musical practitioners, Paiwan flute lessons with master artist Gilegilau Paqalius and his apprentices, and numerous conversations with my Paiwan interlocutors about the perception of Paiwan flutes in contemporary society. Additionally, secondary sources include relevant historical archives, publications, investigation reports, audio-visual items, and survey data from libraries, archives, websites, individual collectors, and government reports. I argue that the designation of Paiwan flutes as a national cultural property is the result of the institutionalization that has taken place since the 1990s. These investigations and publications have not only brought the flutes to public attention, but also played a significant role in reinforcing certain affective values as a core symbol of the Paiwan group, which has encouraged potential practitioners to return to what they had proposed as the “traditional” aesthetic.

### **Paiwan Flutes**

An overview of the historical and demographic aspects of the Paiwan people is helpful for understanding the process of institutionalization of Paiwan flutes. According to the 2018 census, about 2% of the total Taiwanese population of 23 million,<sup>3</sup> were Indigenous peoples, the descendants of Austronesian-speaking peoples who have inhabited Taiwan for millennia before the arrival of Chinese immigrants.<sup>4</sup> The Paiwan people are the second most numerous of the current sixteen officially recognized Indigenous groups of Taiwan,<sup>5</sup> with a population of around 90,000. Historically, the Paiwan people mostly inhabited the southern mountain area of Taiwan, maintaining towns of slate houses that have often been described as an embodiment of the stratification system of Paiwan traditional society—which comprised the hereditary nobility (*mamazangiljan*), the distinguished class (*pualu*), and commoners (*qatitan*)—in ethnographic literature (Chou 2013:47–48). Despite much of the Paiwan people now either resettle in the lowland townships adjacent to their upland homesites or reside in urban centers, several Paiwan people I knew still occasionally traveled back and forth between the new home and the old towns, and still consider these old towns the locus to learn about knowledge and life in the mountains.

The nose flute (*lalingedan*) is traditionally made of two bamboo pipes: one with finger holes and the other without. The hole-less pipe normally produces a drone that

accompanies the other, holed pipe (Figure 1). Although the hole-less pipe can only make a drone without melodic variation, it can do so in different octaves and overtones through breath control. Origin stories of the nose flutes contain references to a young man finding a “hundred-pace viper” (*Deinagkistrodon acutus*) and drilling holes in bamboo pipes to emulate the sound produced by the snake.<sup>6</sup> Because of this structure, the lalingedan produces a unique texture, which many Paiwan people conceive of as closely corresponding with the texture of the Paiwan group singing style called *cemikecikem*: one higher voice part with one drone voice underneath it (Tseng 2012:83). Double-pipe flutes therefore are considered an essential part of the iconic Paiwan sounding mode.

As represented in historical documents and current cultural discourses, Paiwan nose flutes have always been closely identified with high social status in traditional Paiwan society. Several Paiwan flautists recalled that only noble males were allowed to play the nose flutes in the past. Gilegilau Paqalius points out that Paiwan people have also played nose flutes to send comfort when someone passes away, as well as on festive occasions such as harvest festivals (*masalut*) and weddings (personal communication, 8 December 2016).

On the other hand, mouth flutes (*pakulalu*) are mostly available to commoners for playing. The single-pipe mouth flute is called *pakulalu* (Figure 1). The number of finger holes can vary from three to six, depending on the region or community the player hails from. Another version of the double-pipe flute is called *palinged*, which is found in the northern Paiwan area and can be played interchangeably with either the nose or mouth. It has five finger holes with an inclined cork-plugged blowhole (*pinuljupetj*), which produces a louder, brighter, and more penetrating timbre than the circular blowhole (Figure 2).<sup>7</sup>

Both instruments are used mostly in courtship and for expressing individual emotion (Hu et al. 2001:14–15; Chou 2013:55). Historical information about the nose and mouth flutes is based on depictions and descriptions from the eighteenth century, including those from the Qing dynasty’s expansionism (1683–1895) and Japanese colonization (1895–1945). For example, Qing court officer Liu shi-qi’s (六十七) *Illustrations of Taiwan’s Savage Villages* (*Fanshe caifeng tukao* 番社采風圖考) (1744) and Chen Bishen’s (陳必琛) *Illustrations of Savage Customs* (*Fansutu* 番俗圖) provides descriptions and images of nose flutes. These Chinese travel accounts document the nose flutes and their relation to courtship, as well as how nose flute playing was an integral part of their celebrations.<sup>8</sup>



**Figure 1.** *Lalingedan* (Double-pipe nose flute) and *pakulalu* (single-pipe mouth flute). Maker: Gilegilau Paqalius. Photo by Author.



**Figure 2.** Circular blowholes (left) and inclined cork-plugged blowholes (right). Makers: Gilegilau Paqalius (left) and Pairang Pavavalung (right). Photo by Author.

As several flautists recalled, a young man typically played his flutes outside the house of the young woman he wished to court. The young woman would know who was playing

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and be moved by the music. Many of Paiwan flautists point out that there were no fixed repertoires for Paiwan flutes playing in the past.<sup>9</sup> For instance, the player Rhemaliz Tuvelelem (Chiang Chung-Hsin 蔣忠信) recalled that he learned by listening to how other elders (their “teachers”) played, emulating their patterns, and asking them for feedback (Nian 1996:43). Likewise, Gilegilau Paqalius emphasizes that the flute playing is all “about the individual’s own imagination” (*kininemenema*); one can always emulate or add phrasings and patterns from other people’s playing. As such, the music is presented in a solo improvised form that includes highly recognizable personal characteristics, patterns, or ornamentation. Because of these characteristics, Paiwan flute playing (both nose and mouth flutes) is often associated with the reminiscence of individual memory or love stories.

It is evident that the nose and mouth flutes were not exclusively Paiwan instruments. Previous Japanese literature has stated that the nose flute was used by several Indigenous groups, including the Paiwan, the Rukai, the Amis, and the Tsou.<sup>10</sup> For example, Kurosawa Takatomo’s musical investigation of 1943 collected numerous repertoires and documented the use of the nose flutes among the Tsou, the Paiwan, and the Rukai.<sup>11</sup> However, while the Rukai and the Paiwan are closely connected historically, geographically, and culturally, prevalent cultural discourses in Taiwan today rarely address thoughtful sorrow or the sense of sadness as the core component of the Rukai aesthetic.<sup>12</sup>

Successive settler’s colonial governments successively impact the Austronesians culturally and economically.<sup>13</sup> Many layers of transformations led to the gradual decline in the number of the Paiwan flute players in the twentieth century: the assimilationist policies; rural-urban migration; technological and economic innovations; political influences; and the dissolution of pre-colonial belief. In the 1950s, the KMT government carried out the Mountain People’s Life Improvement Movement (*Shandi shenghuo gaijin yundong* 山地生活改進運動), in which the government enforced policies to Sinicize Indigenous peoples, notably formulating Mandarin Chinese as the national language.<sup>14</sup> These assimilation policies were part of the KMT’s purpose of “making the mountains like the plains,” which discriminated against Indigenous customs and cultures. Another transformation in the 1950s and 1960s was the impact of Christianity. Today, the majority of Paiwan people are Christian, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, and churches have been a crucial locus for educational institutions and local affairs (Tan 2003:190).<sup>15</sup> In the early 1950s, many Paiwan people have started to convert to

Christianity due to the Japanese colonial-era restriction on traditional shamanism and some local customs.<sup>16</sup> The churches likewise actively discouraged shamanistic beliefs and practices. Due to the impact of Christianity, many local customs have been reshaped by Christian churches, including the existing folksongs that are incorporated into hymns sung at local churches (Tan 2012:27).

Given the endangered state of Paiwan flutes, practitioners in contemporary Taiwan have gradually loosened the traditional gender and class restrictions on the instruments.<sup>17</sup> For example, as the first female Paiwan flautist, Sauniaw Tjuveljevelj, who is designated as a preserver of Paiwan flutes in Pingtung County in 2008, broke through the gender restrictions and dedicated herself to the transmission of Paiwan flutes in public schools. This transformation is evident in the increasing number of young female learners (Tseng 2012:93). However, the notion that the nose and mouth flutes are exclusively the symbol of the Paiwan was not prominent in the public sphere until a series of activities and discourses in the 1990s. In the following section, I will examine the process of how the sounds of the instruments have been aestheticized into a voice that evokes a sense of loss, love, and thoughtful sorrow, and how these aesthetic components have become a symbol of the Paiwan.

### **Institutionalization and Heritage-making**

The concepts of institutionalization and heritage-making provide a useful analytical framework to examine how large-scale investigations and publications reshape the relationship between the instruments and a particular aesthetic experience, thus establishing the uniqueness of Indigeneity and cultural values. In discussions of the institutionalization of music, the majority of ethnographies have paid attention to the ways in which music institutions reshape local music practices, such as music schools and academies (Hill 2005; Keegan-Phipps 2007). However, the forms of institutionalization are not limited to music institutions. In his analysis of Hakka music in Taiwan, Hsu Hsin-Wen defines institutionalization as the organizational processes through which “particular concepts and practices are selected, adapted, and legitimized as normative categories and structures, integrated and managed in existing or emerging social systems, and maintained or transformed through social actors’ performances and interactions” (Hsu 2014:21). As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett refers to heritage-making as a “value added industry,” the process of institutionalization is crucial in shaping how music and musical practices are classified, categorized, conceptualized, standardized, and refashioned in contemporary time (1995).



The institutionalization of Paiwan flutes also involves a process in which the state and the Taiwanese society have gradually come to regard Paiwan flutes as a legitimate cultural heritage. The Cultural Heritage Preservation Act (*Wenhua zichan baocunfa* 文化資產保存法, hereafter referred to as CHPA) promulgated by Taiwan's government in 1982 introduced the state's intervention in the investigation and preservation of local "traditional arts." The legislation of CHPA first focused on "National arts" (*Minzu yishu* 民族藝術) and "Folk customs and related artifacts" (*Minsu ji youguan wenwu* 民俗及有關文物). Similar to Korean and Japanese models of supporting "holders" of appointed cultural heritage (Howard 2012:13), CHPA entrusted the MOE (Ministry of Education) as the central authority agency in charge of protecting traditional performing arts and subsidizing the protection of traditional artists and the honoring of outstanding ones as Important Traditional Artists (*Zhongyao minzu yishi* 重要民族藝師) (Wang 2012:165). Taiwan's Council for Cultural Affairs (hereafter referred to as "CCA") also made parallel efforts, sponsoring folk arts festivals and concerts (*ibid.*). However, much emphasis of CHPA during this period was put on Han Chinese culture and arts (Lin 2018:155), as the legacy of the Movement of Chinese Cultural Renaissance (*Zhonghua wenhua fuxing yundong* 中華文化復興運動) continued to affect cultural policies during the 1970s and the early 1980s.<sup>18</sup>

With the ascendant democratization of Taiwan in the mid-1980s, the lifting of martial law in 1987 marked a radical change over the Taiwanese discourses of national identity and cultural policies. In this socio-political atmosphere, discourses of new Taiwanese identity have often celebrated multiculturalism and incorporated the narratives of the re-discovery of Indigenous cultural heritage into the cultural formation of Taiwan as a nation distinct from the PRC (Chui 2009:1078). Throughout the 1990s, the CCA collaborated with domestic scholars to conduct a large-scale investigation of local folk arts. Among the musical forms preserved and promoted by the Taiwanese government, Paiwan nose and mouth flutes arguably stand out as one of the most supported Indigenous arts. In this investigation, Paiwan flutes were listed as part of the Folk Arts Preservation and Transmission Project (*Minjian yishu baocun chuanxi jihua*, 民間藝術保存傳習計畫), and Paiwan musicians were listed as human sources.

The first comprehensive revision of CHPA in 2005 introduced the major change in local government's approach to cultural heritage. One of the major transformations is the change of terms; the term Ethnic/National Arts, which refers to "arts unique to an ethnic

group or a locale,” was replaced by Traditional Arts (*Chuantong yishu* 傳統藝術), which means “traditional crafts and skills descended from different ethnic groups and locales, which include traditional arts and crafts, and/or performing arts.” Here the use of “different ethnic groups and locales” in the 2005 version reflects the state’s intention to shift from the Han-centric model to a multi-ethnic model. This can be illustrated by the fact that several Indigenous cultural and art forms have been designated as “Traditional Arts” and “Folk customs and related artifacts” since then.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, the CHPA has also established a local framework in which registration and declaration of heritage are initiated from municipal level to the central government level (Tseng 2015:77). The CCA has replaced the MOE as the central government agency responsible for traditional arts, and municipal (county/city) governments “have responsibility for initiating the review, registration and declaration of traditional arts” (Wang 2012:166). In particular, the Pingtung County government registered “Paiwan nose flutes and mouth flutes” as a local significant cultural heritage in 2008.<sup>20</sup>

Based on the 2005 revision, the CCA has started registering “National Important Traditional Arts” since 2009. At the national level, the CCA registered Paiwan flutes as a “National Important Traditional Art,” declaring Pairang Pavavalung and Gilegilau Paqalius (see Figure 3) as preservers (*baocunzhe* 保存者) of the Traditional Art in 2011.<sup>21</sup> The transmission of National Important Traditional Arts has been implemented through the Program of Preservation and Transmission for National Important Traditional Arts (*Zhongyao chuantong yishu baocunzhe ji baocuntuanti chuanxi jihua* 重要傳統藝術保存者暨保存團體傳習計畫), in which selected master artists and apprentices are considered “cultural bearers” who are responsible for transmitting related forms of knowledge and techniques in a master-apprentice model.

More recently, the 2016 revision of CHPA, which is the widest in revision range since the lawmaking in 1982, has also followed the UNESCO’s logic that divides cultural heritage into “tangible” and “intangible.” The Paiwan flutes are registered as a “Traditional Performing Art” under the category of Intangible Cultural Heritage.<sup>22</sup> The 2016 revision also introduced a specific regulation for Indigenous cultural heritage. Thus, “Regulations of Treatment of Cultural Heritage of Indigenous Peoples” (*Yuanzhuminzu wenhuazichan chulibanfa* 原住民族文化資產處理辦法) was made effective on July 18, 2017.<sup>23</sup> This change further elaborates the particularity of Indigenous cultural heritage and thus opens up a new criterion of registration and preservation of Indigenous cultural



**Figure 3. National designated preservers of Paiwan flutes Pairang Pavavalung (left) and Gilegilau Paqalius (right).**

heritage. Despite such transformative change in recent years, this article will mainly focus on the institutionalization process before the 2016 revision and changes are made.

### **The Politics of Musical Instruments**

A growing body of scholarship on instruments has argued that an instrument is not merely an object or a “finished” product of crafting, but a crucial site that entails related knowledge, practices, embodiment, and sensory memory (Qureshi 2000; Wong 2012). New approaches to instruments also include those that emphasize the agency of instruments as social actors (Dawe 2003; Bates 2012; Roda 2015), and those that adopt the notion of craftsmanship to examine the interconnectedness of the ideological, aesthetic, and technical aspects (Jakovljevic 2012; Tucker 2016). This trend calls for a new organology that replaces the influential Hornbostel-Sachs model (defined by categorization sound-making properties) with “an ethnographically motivated examination of a specific musical instrument in a particular social context” (Sonevytsky 2008:103). While the early scholarship on Taiwan’s Indigenous instruments mostly adopted Hornbostel-Sachs model of instrument classification (Lenherr 1967; Lu 1982; Hsu 1994), I argue that the politics of musical instruments specifically offers an analytical lens to examine the multiple frames of stereotyping and heritage-making enterprises.

Instruments may serve as powerful material objects to symbolize ethnicities and places where identities are referenced, and may also be usefully conceived as social beings that

were produced and maintained in webs of social relations and contested meanings (Wong 2012:36; Rancier 2014; Ragheb 2017). In his article on Uyghur *rawap* in modern China, Wong Chuen-Fung argues that the “conspicuous appearances of minority musical instruments” and “the sonic imaginaries invoked” for the Han Chinese audience have provided the state with “useful tools to stereotype minority cultures” (2012:37). Similarly, Regula Qureshi (2000) analyzes how the discursive representations of the Indian bowed lute *sarangi* have endowed the instrument with associations of sadness, loss, and mourning.<sup>24</sup> In her study of “the social life” of the accordion, Maria Sonevitsky (2008) considers the musical instrument an actor in the making of musical meaning, interrogating how instrumentalists consciously manipulate stylistically racialized or classed “codes” to heighten musical affect. All these case studies suggest a framework to examine discourses, practices, and representations surrounding the physical body and sonic imaginaries of the instruments, the ideas about its music, and the musicians.<sup>25</sup> While the process of institutionalization often reinforces certain affective and aesthetic values to the instruments, this article highlights the importance of gaining a more solid grasp of the relationship between musical sound and affective experience, as well as how the affective and aesthetic experiences are defined through a series of discourses and social practices.

### **Representing the Paiwan Art**

Since the 1990s, a growing number of Taiwanese scholarly works and media publications have paid attention to Indigenous arts, which provided an effective discursive space to enunciate the ideal aesthetic and practices of Indigenous culture and arts. These practices and publications are not simply the narratives or documentation resulting from the investigations. Rather, they played a significant role in articulating the relationship among the instruments, related aesthetic experiences, and an “ideal Paiwan sound” through media activities and commentaries.

Newly emerged Indigenous journals such as *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly* address critical issues in Indigenous culture and arts.<sup>26</sup> Established in 1993, *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly* is arguably the first journal dedicated to Indigenous culture. Its initial goal was to create a discursive forum for promoting the Indigenous cultural movement, advocating public engagement by Indigenous peoples, and “awakening” the Indigenous subjective consciousness. What is important about *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly* is that it has included articles and local newspapers about Indigenous peoples, which not only documented musical activities (especially government-sponsored ones) in

Indigenous communities, but also furthered the understanding of Indigenous music from 1993 to 2000.

As reported in these local newspapers, numerous initiatives of Indigenous cultural activities around the middle of the 1990s emphasized themes of “tradition,” “transmission,” and “transition.” Many artists at that time interpreted “tradition” or the ancestral past through artistic creations, by means of ceramics, weaving, or carving, but many more interpreted it through music. One of the indications of this intense attention was the sudden increase in the presence of Indigenous crafts and studios and clubs related to their production and marketing, and print media has increasingly covered aspects of Indigenous musical performances and workshops since 1993 (Hsieh 2004:145).

Among the notable activities on the national scale to promote Indigenous culture in the middle of the 1990s, there was a series of forums on Indigenous crafts, arts, and culture named “The Transmission and Development of Taiwan’s Indigenous Culture and Arts” (*Taiwan yuanzhumin wenhua yishu chuancheng yu fazhan* 台灣原住民文化藝術傳承與發展). This series of forums, hosted by *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly* in partnership with CCA in 1995, included more than twenty regional forums throughout Taiwan. The series of forums can thereby be regarded as a crucial initiation of musical activities for Indigenous peoples to articulate their “traditions” and highlight their ethnic identity. For instance, more than two hundred Indigenous folk artists in a variety of fields participated in this series of forums.<sup>27</sup> Collectively, these forums emphasized the maintenance of pre-colonial beliefs and practices that are markedly different from those with the impact of modernizing forces attached to commodification and ethnic tourism (CCA 1996:16). These forums and activities constituted a crucial space to stimulate discussions of Indigenous crafts and arts and facilitate the dissemination of Indigenous music and instruments, including instrument-making and playing.<sup>28</sup>

While these emerging activities were intended to highlight the characteristics of particular Indigenous groups, there was an increase in the number of the people learning Indigenous instruments, and some instruments have gradually become representative of particular Indigenous groups. For instance, the Atayal have taught mouth-harps (*lubuw*), the Bunun have specialized in bow harps (*latuk*), and the Paiwan have focused on the nose and mouth flutes (Lu 2003). This instrument-ethnicity connection has become a common way of conceptualizing the musical characteristic of each Indigenous group, which is clearly reflected in Hsu Chang-Hui’s article about Indigenous music in 1994

(Hsu 1994:13). In his article, Hsu provided a figure featuring the musical characteristic of each Indigenous group (Figure 4). This representation resonates with the concept of “museum-in-a-book/recording” (Bohlman 1991:145; Chen 2007:78), in which scholars’ writing and recordings present the specific musical aspects of each Indigenous group as the museum specimens.

As the activities mentioned above stimulated the debates about Indigenous music, a number of articles in *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly* emphasized the connection between Indigenous arts, literary compositions, mythologies, and rituals and ceremonies. For instance, Volume 13 of *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly* (1996) specifically compiled articles about Paiwan mythologies, songs and meanings for *maljeveq* (five-year ceremonies) in the Paiwan Kulalau community, Paiwan flutes, and the aesthetic of Paiwan arts. Domestic scholars have collaborated with Indigenous cultural groups and/or individual artists to conduct investigations, document, and transcribe Indigenous music. According to these articles, the nose and mouth flutes present the unique style and aesthetics of the Paiwan group. The Paiwan artist Etan Pavavalung points out in his article that the carving patterns on Paiwan sculptures or flutes are related to various Paiwan myths and have their own cultural significance. The Paiwan flute artist Sauniaw Tjuveljevelj also notes that the iconic “double-pipe” structure of Paiwan flutes symbolizes the close relationship among relatives portrayed in Paiwan myths (*milimilingan*) (Tjuveljevelj 2000). A number of players likewise drew a strong link between the instrument’s structure and Paiwan myths. For example, Etan Pavavalung’s documentary shows that the sound of double-pipe flutes is conceived to be a metaphor of two Paiwan brothers chanting in Paiwan myths. This metaphor is reflected in the title of Pairang Pavavalung’s 2011 album “*Chuanchang ailian de xiongli*” [Brothers Who Sing of Love and Longing]. In short, Paiwan flutes become an assemblage that enables the ideas within Paiwan myths, aesthetic values, and musical practices to be (re)articulated in various cultural discourses and activities.

Most Paiwan people then considered the nose and mouth flutes and its music as “ancient” and “unique.” Because flute playing has often been isolated from other Paiwan song-and-dance activities, it became a symbol of the best of Paiwan’s own music and a way to counteract influences from Han and pop music imported from the West.

The CCA similarly contributed to this wave of Indigenization, reformulated its annual Culture and Arts Festival (*Wenyiji* 文藝季) into a Nationwide Culture and Art Festival (*Quanguo wenyiji* 全國文藝季) in 1994 (Wang 2012).<sup>29</sup> At the Nationwide Culture and



**Figure 4. A figure represents the music of each Indigenous group in Hsu Chang-Hui's article in 1994. At the bottom of this figure, an iconic one-pipe nose flute represents the Paiwan group.**

Art Festival, a series of activities on Paiwan arts, folklore, and culture was held in Pingtung County in 1997 entitled “Paiwan civilization” (*Paiwan wenming* 排灣文明), including song-and-dance performances, folkloric activities, conferences, exhibitions, and workshops (Tsai 1997). The participants included prominent cultural workers, elders, artists, intellectuals, and scholars in various fields of Paiwan arts and cultural knowledge. In the section on Paiwan music, Vuluk Palimdai (Lai Chao-Tsai 賴朝財), who is a church-trained Paiwan pastor and a Paiwan flute player, advocated for the government and cultural workers to examine the specific (perhaps representative) characteristics of Paiwan songs and instrumental music, because “such an examination may reduce the misunderstanding of Paiwan musical style that contemporary musical productions and activities may have imposed on the younger generation.”<sup>30</sup> Lamenting how much things have changed since the days of the ancestors, his brief examination on Paiwan music



emphasizes the “uncontaminated” music as representative of essentialized Paiwan identities to celebrate the richness of Paiwan culture. In portraying the history of Paiwan culture as one of decay, these Indigenous intellectuals and practitioners furthered the perception that the most important fact about Indigenous peoples in that era is their overall disenfranchisement, including the loss of their languages, various cultural expressions, and their core aesthetic values. Therefore, academic investigations and publications on Indigenous music provided an effective voice for Indigenous actors to legitimize and promote the recognition of their music and related aesthetics.

### **Folk Art Preservation**

From 1995 to 2003, CCA replaced the Ministry of Education (MOE) as the state agency with the leading responsibility to preserve and promote Taiwan’s Traditional Arts, initiating the first full-fledged Folk Arts Preservation and Training Program.<sup>31</sup> The National Center for Traditional Arts (NCFTA) is a subsidiary body under the CCA. Unsurprisingly, the state has privileged some markers of group identity over others, paying attention to those “representative” or “authentic” arts of particular Indigenous groups for funding. In 2000, 282 Taiwan’s Traditional Arts groups applied to the government for a subsidy from the NCFTA, and only nine Indigenous arts groups gained a subsidy.<sup>32</sup> Among the projects in Folk Arts Preservation and Training Program, Paiwan flutes and Atayal mouth-harp (lubuw) stood out as the best government-supported Indigenous arts due to its uniqueness. Such ideology normally emphasized the connection between an instrument and an Indigenous group. They also used the designation of folk artists to recognize those who taught and advocated for Indigenous instruments, as well as promoting the instruments as the “valuable traditions” worth learning by the people of each particular Indigenous group.

The CCA commissioned anthropologist Hu Tai-Li of Academia Sinica (*zhongyang yanjiu yuan* 中央研究院) to carry out a large-scale investigation and the Paiwan Nose and Mouth Flutes Preservation Project.<sup>33</sup> The findings were later published (Hu, Chien, and Lai 2001; Hu 2002), and released as a CD and the documentary entitled *Sounds of Love and Sorrow*. This state-funded investigation and preservation project can be regarded as the precursor of the 2011 designation of National Important Traditional Arts.



<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Principal investigator(s)</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Year(s)</b>
Paiwan Nose and Mouth Flutes Preservation and Transmission Planning Proposal	Hu Tai-Li 胡台麗	Academia Sinica	1995/06~1996/12
Paiwan Nose and Mouth Flutes Preservation Project	Hu Tai-Li 胡台麗	Academia Sinica	1997/01/01~1997/12/31
Atayal Mouth Harp Preservation Project	Hsu Chang-Hui 許常惠	Taiwan Indigenous Music Foundation	1997/04/01~1998/06/30
Bunun Bow Harp Preservation Project	Hsu Chang-Hui 許常惠	Taiwan Indigenous Music Foundation	1997/10/01~1998/06/30
Atayal Mouth-Harp Preservation Project	Hsu Chang-Hui 許常惠	Taiwan Indigenous Music Foundation	1998/09/01~1999/06/30 1999/10/15~2000/10/15
Paiwan Nose and Mouth Flutes Transmission Project	Hung Wan-Lung; Tsai Tung-Yuan 洪萬隆; 蔡泉源	Cultural Affairs Bureau of Pingtung County	1998/12/01~1999/11/30 2001/01/20~2001/12/20

**Table 1. Government-funded preservation projects that supported Indigenous arts from 1995-2003.**

Hu led a research team to carry out the first in-depth collection and documentation of the history of Paiwan flutes musicians in Pingtung County. Thirty Paiwan musicians were interviewed, along with the audio-visual documentation of their music, the collection of their life histories, and mythologies of the instruments. This was the first comprehensive documentation and classification of the structure, techniques, styles, performing

occasions, and myths of Paiwan flutes. Its music and performers gained public attention through books, the CD, and the documentary.

In these sources, Hu notes that several Paiwan flautists described the sounds of lalingedan and pakulalu as similar to weeping and leading to the strong emotion of *talimuzav* (translated as “thoughtful sorrow” in English, *ai si* 哀思 in Chinese). According to one of the flautists, Tsegav Talulaiats (Li Cheng 李正), the term *talimuzav* contains the meaning of “yearning for past things” (*kinemeneme a varhung*; see Hu et al. 2001:74). From an etymological perspective, Hu suggests that the Paiwan emotion of thoughtful sorrow, existing in and starting from the “chest” (*varhung*), is connected with love and is prevalent in Paiwan culture. She further adds that many of her Paiwan informants regarded this particular weeping-like sound as being beautiful (*samiring*). Distinguished from the terms *nanguaq* or *burai* that are used in speaking about general beauty,<sup>34</sup> she claims that *samiring* refers to “unusual beauty with everlasting value” and also “contains the meaning of sorrow, loneliness, surprise and lingering” (2005:165).<sup>35</sup> The aesthetic experience of *samiring* connects people to the ancestral past, creating a kind of wistful feeling, which is expressed by Hu as “thoughtful sorrow” (ibid).

With this being the case, Hu discursively placed “thoughtful sorrow” as the central component of the Paiwan aesthetic (Hu 2005:155).<sup>36</sup> Her view on this aesthetic value is reflected in the documentary *Sounds of Love and Sorrow*. The film consists mainly of four Paiwan flautists’ reminiscent narratives and dialogs about their love and sorrowful stories in the past, and the sound of the flutes is mixed with the narratives and transitions between stories.<sup>37</sup> Hu points out this type of sonic character in the CD booklet as follows:

The sound of the flute was the sound of weeping, and it evokes a sense of sorrow and loss. When Paiwan people hear the sound of the flute, memories and emotions come flooding in, and they recall past loves, lost relatives and former homes...

Hu Tai-Li, *Sounds of Love and Sorrow*

In her publication on the interpretation of the aesthetic of Paiwan flutes (2002), Hu further connected *talimuzav* to various cultural aspects of the Paiwan: motifs of antique glass beads and the *iaqu* sung in *maljeveq* (five-year ceremonies).<sup>38</sup> Studies on Paiwan material culture have considered antique glass beads an important symbol that preserved cultural knowledge; different names, colors, and patterns of beads are deemed as meaningful family heirlooms and significant cultural symbols to recall cultural memory

and oral history (Chen 2015:167).<sup>39</sup> Based on Hu's observation, Paiwan people consider those glass beads that "look old" to be beautiful (Hu 2002:80). In a similar vein, *iaqu*, the tune that normally used for *maljeveq* to commemorate ancestors, features a strong attachment to the ancestors and things they left behind by which they are remembered (ibid). All of these forms, in Hu's view, connect the Paiwan people to their ancestral past, creating a kind of wistful feeling that is driven by the aesthetic experience of *talimuzav*.

From the perspective of sound, Hu points out that Paiwan myth storytelling (*milimilingan*) is typically performed in a weeping-like tone that resembles funeral laments (*cemangit*), and Paiwan flutes have traditionally been used as accompaniment to both vocal genres rather than for folk songs in general (Hu 2002:72). Such an effort to link instruments, mythologies, and aesthetic conceptualizations of sounds resonates with Steven Feld's analysis of the Kaluli's integrated relationship to weeping, songs, local mythology about birds, and the sounding environment of the rainforest and waterfalls (Feld 2012 [1982]).<sup>40</sup> Feld illustrates how the Kaluli expressive modalities of weeping and songs are "culturally constituted by performance codes that both actively communicate deeply felt sentiments and reconfirm mythic principles" (ibid.:14). While it is clear that Hu's work is inspired by Feld in terms of how the sounds constitute socially meaningful expressions (ibid:88), we should ask how the affective experience became a norm and have been transformed/translated into a contemporary concept.

### **Affective and Aesthetic Ideology**

In many cases, the discourse and practices of folklore illustrate the transformation of Indigenous culture by heightening certain aesthetic expression for the service of folklorists. This is evident when the government's Folk Art Projects attempt to "elevate" local musical practices to the so-called "Folk Arts." Later scholars and the government's investigative reports also discursively framed Hu as an early representative of scholarship on Paiwan flutes and as a scholar who advocated for the aesthetic values of Indigenous arts in Taiwan (Tseng 2008; Huang 2011; Tseng 2012, 2015). In this regard, these early ethnographic writing and documentary film may lead to a partial aestheticization of both the term *talimuzav* and the people and experiences that it seeks to represent. I argue that the music investigations and publications since the 1990s have reinforced the association between the flutes' musical image and the Paiwan's aesthetic of particular sadness, loss, and sorrow.

As music emotives can be claimed to define an “affectual ethnic self” (Stokes 2017:25), it is important to examine how the narratives of affect are internalized by members of the Indigenous group as markers of their own identity. Chen Chun-Bin points out that an “imposed habitus” has been exhibited among Taiwan’s Indigenous peoples when Indigenous practitioners represent themselves as a passionate and “happy-go-lucky ethnic group” (2007:55). Chen considers this “imposed habitus” as a driven force that performs a function in “facilitating the absorption of elements brought by outside forces” and in “reshaping the Indigenous musical practices” through the dissemination of early Indigenous tourist song-and-dance performance (ibid).<sup>41</sup> This process of inculcating imposed habitus can be regarded as a way non-Indigenous discourse has molded Indigenous perceptions of themselves. Similarly, the impression of thoughtful sorrow as the symbol of the Paiwan group can be reinforced via the dissemination of recordings, documentary films, and publications.

Instead of arguing that the “thoughtful sorrow” did not exist in the cultural expression of the Paiwan, my point here is that documentation and publication play a crucial role in promoting both public and community knowledge and awareness of the significance of a music genre or an instrument.<sup>42</sup> I am convinced that Hu’s work is central in the dissemination of the idea that talimuzav is the core aesthetic value of Paiwan flutes to be promoted. Paiwan people, likewise, may have consciously incorporated the discourse from these scholarly publications to legitimize what they practice. This situation is reminiscent of the case among the Uyghur in northwestern China, in which becoming a minority stereotype “is not only about being subservient”; it is also about “adopting a subaltern subjectivity with social practices and aesthetic codes that mediate among traditional practice, state-framed modernity, and a sense of minority belonging” (Wong 2012:48).

One of the reasons that Paiwan flute music is believed to be the aestheticized sonic image of sadness and sorrow is its particular techniques. Indeed, several Paiwan flautists’ playing featured a particularly intense vibrato (*migereger*) and a smooth glissando produced by sliding the fingers off or onto the holes, both of which are known as the distinct sonic profile of the Paiwan.<sup>43</sup> In my conversation with Gilegilau Paqalius, he noted that such techniques of intense vibrato and glissando feature an emphasis on the “weeping-like sounds” (*qaung*). In the documentary *Brothers Who Sing of Love and Longing* (2011), Peleng Rupunayan (Pairang Pavavalung’s wife) points out that the favored sound of the flute that particularly “makes you fall in love with it” is called *qatarengeran*, which is a sliding-like stylized tone. Peleng further elaborated that they

also sing or hum like qatarengeran, and “it expresses a kind of longing” (*qemaulyan*). Likewise, Pairang Pavavalung also emphasizes the importance of the stylized sliding technique to make the flute’s sound beautiful (Tseng 2015:88).

However, according to my personal communication with Paiwan music scholar Chou Ming-Chieh (周明傑), these particular techniques are just the ways in which those players expressed themselves naturally.<sup>44</sup> Taking a more critical stance, Chou expressed the concern that placing “thoughtful sorrow” as the core aesthetic value of the flutes’ sound may convey a misleading message that all the Paiwan musicking is immersed in such a sorrowful emotion all of the time. Paiwan flute playing, in his opinion, typically does not express certain kinds of emotion as the content. Rather, he considers it an “ambience” that evokes listeners’ own feelings at the moment (Interview, Pingtung, 10 August 2017). In his dissertation “Tradition and Transition: A Research on the Vocal Music of Paiwan” (2013), Chou did not specifically address talimuzav as the central component of Paiwan musical aesthetic. Rather, he briefly introduced Paiwan flute playing as “a form of self-expression that resembles a metaphor of one’s mind” (*ibid.*).

In examining the relationship between Paiwan flutes and affect I am attempting to highlight several points. First, Chou’s review resonates with David J. Elliot’s notion that human audition is “phenomenally fluid,” affecting the listener’s aesthetic experience (Elliot 2000:85-86). Elliot’s notion suggests that there are many layers of personal and social meaning “to ‘locate’, apprehend, construct, and feel emotions about in musical work” (*ibid.*). Nian Siou-Ling (年秀玲), a Paiwan member who was the assistant for the 1995 Preservation Project of Paiwan flutes, states that the Paiwan flautist Rhemaliz Tuvlelem always played identical or similar tunes on various occasions, including courtship and funerals (Nian 1996:44).<sup>45</sup> While it is clear that the players used to play their habitual tunes on various occasions, what evokes certain affects and emotions, in this case, relies on individual attachments to memories of particular sound patterns, or appreciations of personal response to the musical expression of emotions they cognize (Elliot 2000:86).

Second, musicians have the agency to “locate entire emotional spectrums in musical meaning” (Gill 2017:7). According to Pairang Pavavalung, the Paiwan flute playing can be inspired by various emotions and feelings, including joy, sorrow, and gratitude. He suggests that the musical emotion actually relies on the individual’s interpretation and presentation at that moment (Tseng 2015:81). In this regard, to over-emphasize “sorrow”

as the core affective experience of the Paiwan may to some extent essentialize the Paiwan people as an emotional other in contrast to other groups.

One should also note that to flatten the term *talimuzav* by translating it as “thoughtful sorrow” may lead to a generalization that erases the multivalent nature of affect. In her study of Turkish classical musicians, Denise Gill points out that Turkish classical musicians “have multiple names and terms for ‘melancholy’” (2017:190). Melancholy, Gill argues, “surfaces as an affective practice that is sustained in forms of joy and happiness” in the larger emotional fabric of musicians’ experiences (ibid). This resonates with what Martin Stokes called the “non-translatibility” of affective ambivalence (2017:25), through which he addresses the inability to coin an appropriately translated word for a certain affective experience. When publications and media production have inculcated people with the expectation to recognize “thoughtful sorrow” as an affective Paiwan aesthetic, we need to take into account such affective ambivalence and how partial translation may result in a different understanding of affective dimension of musical identity.

### **Contemporary Concept of Paiwan Flutes**

Nowadays, discourses about the sorrowfulness of Paiwan flutes are indeed pervasive. However, academic investigative reports and publications on *lalingedan* and *pakulalu* in Taiwan before the 2000s show that the sorrowful titles were not widely adopted as a part of the referencing experience by most audio recordings and publications. These song titles or liner notes to some extent manifest certain modes of classifying Paiwan music and artists. Most of the writings and recordings before the 2000s classified Indigenous music by its social function or musicological characteristics of homophonic, harmonic, and polyphonic textures.<sup>46</sup> This followed the legacy of the classification from early Japanese and Han ethnomusicologists who classified songs and added titles for research consistency. For example, the album *Polyphonies Vocales Des Aborigènes De Taiwan* [Vocal Polyphonies of Taiwanese Indigenous Peoples], released in 1989 by the Chinese Folk Arts Foundation and produced by Hsu Chang-Hui, includes two songs featuring Paiwan singing with the accompaniment of a double-pipe mouth flute played by Pairang Pavavalung.<sup>47</sup> These two tracks were both labeled “*Chant de séduction*” [Song of seduction] based on their social function, i.e., courtship. Later, the 1994 album *The Songs of the Paiwan Tribe, The Music Of Aborigines On Taiwan Island, Vol. 7*, recorded and produced by ethnomusicologist Wu Rung-Shun as part of a set of eight CDs featuring music of eight different Indigenous groups, included one track played by Pairang

Album	Track title(s)	Producer(s)	Year
<i>Taiwan genju minzoku Takasagozoku no ongaku</i> [Taiwan Indigenous Music] (disc 3)	“Zongdi duzou” (縱笛獨奏) [A solo of the vertical flute]	Lu Bin-Chuan 呂炳川	1977
<i>Zhongguo minsu yinyue zhuanji 11: Taiwan shanbao de yinyue – Cao, Paiwan, Saixia, Yamei, Pingpu</i> [A special album of Chinese folk music, Vol. 11: Taiwan Indigenous Music – The Tsou, the Paiwan, the Saisiyat, the Yami, and the Plain Indigenous Peoples]	“Zongdi duzou” (縱笛獨奏) [A solo of the vertical flute]	Hsu Chang-Hui; Lu Bin-Chuan 許常惠; 呂炳川	1980
<i>Polyphonies Vocales Des Aborigènes De Taiwan</i> [Vocal Polyphonies of Taiwanese Aborigines]	“Chant de séduction” [Song of seduction]	Hsu Chang-Hui 許常惠	1989
<i>Taiwan yuanzhumin yinyue jishi 7, Paiwanzu de yinyue</i> [The Songs of the Paiwan Tribe, The Music Of Aborigines On Taiwan Island, Vol. 7]	“Shuangguan zhuzhi zongdi duzou” (雙管竹製縱笛獨奏) [Double-pipe vertical flute solo]	Wu Rung-Shun 吳榮順	1994
<i>Bentu yinyue de chuanchang yu xinshang</i> [The Transmission and Appreciation of Native Music]	“Bidi yanzou” (鼻笛演奏) [Nose flute solo]	National Traditional Arts Center	2000
<i>Paiwanzu de bidi yu koudi</i> [Paiwan Nose flutes and Mouth Flutes]	e.g., “Shuangguan bidiqu” (雙管鼻笛曲) [The song of double-pipe nose flute]	Hu Tai-Li 胡台麗	2001

**Table 2. Recordings of Paiwan flutes and titles through 2001.**

Pavavalung titled “Shuangguan zhuzhi zongdi duzou” (雙管竹製縱笛獨奏) [“Double-pipe vertical flute solo”]. Similarly, the book *Bentu yinyue de chuanchang yu xinshang* [The Transmission and Appreciation of Native Music], published by the National

Traditional Arts Center in 2000, compiled chapters and recordings of representative “traditional” Han and Indigenous music in Taiwan. In the section featuring Paiwan music, one track (played by Camak Paqalius) is titled “Nose flute solo.” Another example can be seen in Hu’s book and CD *Paiwanzu de bidi yu koudi* [Paiwan Nose flutes and Mouth Flutes] published in 2001, in which all twenty tracks were labeled based on the structure of the instruments used (e.g., “The song of double-pipe nose flute”). In short, the music of Paiwan flutes was rarely labeled or titled to convey a sense of sorrow, loss, or sadness before the release of Hu’s work. The notion of “thoughtful sorrow” had perhaps not been prioritized as an essential component of the Paiwan aesthetic in investigators’ and scholars’ classification framework.<sup>48</sup>

However, there has been an upsurge in song titles that are associated with sadness, love, or sorrow in albums since the 2000s, despite the fact that many tracks share similar melodic patterns to earlier ones. A number of CD liner notes often portrayed the “sorrowful sound” as the sonic profile of Paiwan flutes. The album *Zuyun yueyan: shibanwu shang de bidi* [The Nose Flute on the Slate House], issued in 2002, included one track featuring the nose flute played by Rhemaliz Tuvlelem named “*Jimo zhige*” (寂寞之歌) [“The Song of Loneliness”]. Interestingly, a highly similar rendition by Rhemaliz can be heard in Hu’s 2001 CD even though it is labeled “Twin-pipe nose flute performed by Rhemaliz.” In the national preservation and transmission project of Paiwan flutes since 2011, the two master artists Pairang Pavavalung and Gilegilau Paqalius have included several transmission repertoires whose titles express loss, love, and sorrow. Many of these repertoires are included in Pairang Pavavalung’s album *Chuanchang ailian de xiongdi* [Brothers Who Sing of Love and Longing]. All of its eleven CD tracks have named titles, and many of them express a sense of loss, love, or sorrow.<sup>49</sup> It is worth noting that a number of the songs in his album are actually Paiwan folk tunes originally named with Paiwan non-lexical syllables such as “*quljimai*” and “*qai-lja-ljai*,” but added the Chinese and English translated titles that explicitly express those emotions. These Chinese and English titles for the CD tracks can be regarded as a consequence of the process of aestheticization. A look at some titles gives a sense of the prevalence of these themes:

“*Quljimai*” (“As Joyous as a Blooming Flower,” 歡悅像盛開的花)

“*Qai-lja-ljai*” (“Admiring the Beauty of Your Countenance,” 戀慕你的容顏你的美麗)

—Pairang Pavavalung



“*Masadjusudju a lalingedan*” (“Loving the Paiwan Flutes,” 戀慕排灣笛)

—Sauniaw Tjuveljevelj

Much institutionalization is also about reformulating and controlling aesthetics. An upsurge in new musical productions, marketing materials (flyers, concert programs, social media), and publications uses this new emblem to romanticize, localize, and historicize the image of Paiwan music. Several contemporary Indigenous artists or music groups, ranging from folk troupes to pop bands, describe the sound of nose and mouth flutes as weeping, using the image of flutes to symbolize the Paiwan people and arouse a sense of longing for their ancestral past. Since the musical image has resonated well with icons of weeping and longing, performers have used the instruments to portray the feeling of “sadness” and “antiquity.” One of the most prominent examples of this is evident in a series of events and productions organized around the main theme of the snake. For instance, the Bureau of Cultural Heritage issued a picture book of Paiwan nose flute *Minasi* (Breathing out of two nostrils) in 2017. Through this picture book, the Bureau of Cultural Heritage aimed to create a new emblem for Paiwan flutes so that general Taiwanese readers are exposed to the origin stories and aesthetic of Paiwan flutes. It is worth noting that the book constantly emphasizes the “sorrowful tune” as the stylized characteristic of Paiwan flutes.<sup>50</sup> The aestheticization of Paiwan flutes has therefore been recontextualized into the new generation through a series of transmission and promotion projects, and the music of Paiwan flutes has been publicized as a representative form of Paiwan art worth learning by the Paiwan people and appreciated by the general audience.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, music investigations and publications contribute to institutionalization and heritage-making. From systematic collection and documentation to living persons’ musical knowledge and practices, these music-related publications, activities, and practices are not separate. Rather, I suggest that these investigations and publications did more than neutrally document; they reconstructed partially lost performance genres, promoted certain aesthetic values as a symbol of a particular ethnic group, and encouraged potential practitioners to return to what they had proposed as original forms (Howard 2014:138). Once a process of aestheticization and institutionalization has reinforced the impression of the instruments as a Paiwan symbol, Indigenous actors may incorporate the discourses from these scholarly publications to legitimize what they practice, and adapt the instruments and music in various ways. In other words, they have participated in a feedback loop with academic publications and popular discourse, which

in turn affect the way Indigenous musicians conceptualize their music. Through a close examination of the affective dimension of Indigenous Paiwan flutes, this article provides an alternative look at how institutionalization and heritage-making may further the aesthetic and affective ideology surrounding instruments.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For this article I use the Hanyu *pinyin* system for Chinese terms. The Chinese place names in Taiwan are rendered based on common use (some are based on Wade–Giles system, some are Hanyu *pinyin*). Chinese names of authors writing in Chinese and residents of Taiwan are rendered in the Wade-Giles system, a more commonly used system in Taiwan. The Chinese names are given in customary style (surname first, given name second). Names of authors writing in English are spelled as in their publications. Paiwan-language terms are romanized using Paiwan romanization system enacted by Taiwan’s Ministry of Education and Council of Indigenous Peoples in 2005, but quotes from other texts may not conform to this Romanization system. Paiwan names are spelled as in other publications, or based on the person’s own spelling. However, some Indigenous peoples prefer to be addressed only by either their Indigenous names or Chinese names in publications or media. In this case, their other names (either Chinese or Indigenous) will not be provided in this article. For the sake of brevity, all the Chinese characters for Chinese titles of albums will be provided in the references cited.

<sup>2</sup> The Council of Cultural Affairs declared the master artists Pairang Pavavalung (Hsu Kun-Chung 許坤仲) and Gilegilau Paqalius (Hsieh Shui-Neng 謝水能) as preservers of Paiwan nose and mouth flutes.

<sup>3</sup> According to the 2018 census by the Taiwanese Ministry of the Interior.

<sup>4</sup> Today, the majority population in Taiwan is Han Chinese, who descended from multiple waves of immigrants from Mainland China and made up 95% of the total national population of 23 million in 2018.

<sup>5</sup> The Council of Indigenous Peoples lists: the Atayal, the Amis, the Saisiyat, the Sediq, the Thao, the Bunun, the Tsou, the Truku, the Sakizaya, the Kavalan, the Puyuma, the Rukai, the Paiwan, the Yami, the Hla'alua, and the Kanakanavu.

<sup>6</sup> This kind of snake is named “hundred-pace snake” because it is held that one can only take one hundred steps after being bitten before succumbing to its deadly venom (Cline 2014: 209-10).

<sup>7</sup> The Paiwan people are mainly divided into two sub-groups according to their original homelands rather than contemporary administrative areas. Those from the upper north in the region of Tavuvu mountain called themselves Ravar, while Vutsul is centered around Tjagalaus mountain, located near Taiwu Township.

<sup>8</sup> Yu Yong-He (郁永河) provided this account of native courtship in *Pihai jiyou* (裨海紀遊) (1697): “In marriage they have no go-betweens; when the girls are grown, their parents have them live separately in a hut. All the youths who wish to find a mate come along, playing their nose-flutes and mouth-organs...” (Teng 2004:179).

<sup>9</sup> According to my conversation with master artist Gilegilau Paqalius and Paiwan music scholar Chou Ming-Chieh (周明傑).

<sup>10</sup> Colonial Japanese musicologist Kurosawa Takatomo’s research documented the use of nose flutes among the Paiwan, the Rukai, and the Tsou. Joseph Lenherr points out that the nose flute

(one holed pipe with one hole-less pipe) is typical of the Rukai where it corresponds to their polyphonic choir-style (1967:121). Joseph Lenherr was a missionary priest and also a visiting scholar at Academia Sinica in the early 1960s. The data for his article was derived primarily from his eight-month period of fieldwork in Taiwan in 1965 (Lenherr 1967:109).

<sup>11</sup> Numerous Japanese scholars documented Indigenous nose and mouth flutes, including anthropologist Ino Kanori (伊能嘉矩) and musicologists Tanabe Hisao (田邊尚雄), Takenaka Shigeo (竹中重雄), and Kurosawa Takatomo (黒澤隆朝) (Lu 1982:172; Hu et al. 2001:9; Wang 2008, 2018). It is worth noting that Kurosawa Takatomo's wartime recordings (1943) include two tracks of nose flute playing by the Rukai people (Wang 2008).

<sup>12</sup> The Rukai are the second-largest Indigenous group in Pingtung County. Wang Ying-Fen notes that the nose flute has become the symbol of the Paiwan due to the dissemination of the documentary *Sounds of Love and Sorrow* (2000) produced by Academia Sinica fellow Hu Tai-Li (Wang 2008:185).

<sup>13</sup> These include the Dutch (1624-1662), Spaniards (1626-1624), Chinese (Koxinga rule and Qing court), Japanese (1895-1945), and Kuomintang (Chinese Nationalist Party, hereafter KMT) governments.

<sup>14</sup> The KMT government used the term *shanbao* (山胞, mountain people) to refer to Indigenous peoples during this period.

<sup>15</sup> It is worth noting that many Paiwan flute players are practicing Christians, including Gilegilau Paqalius, Sauniaw Tuvjeljelj, Vuluk Palimdai (Lai Chao-Tsai 賴朝財), and Gilegilau Lalangal (Chen Ming-Kuang 陳明光) (Tseng 2012).

<sup>16</sup> Like other Indigenous groups in Taiwan, the spread of Christianity among Paiwan communities also caused the impoverishment of *palisi*, which is the pre-Christian Paiwan shamanistic ritual. Palisi is ancestral "laws, customs" and "taboos, rituals" passed down from generation to generation (Tan 2003:192). For more details about how Christianity impacts on traditional Paiwan rituals, see Tan 2003.

<sup>17</sup> For example, Chen Tsai-Hsing (陳再興), a Paiwan educator who is also the principal of Sandi Elementary School (三地國小) in Pingtung County, particularly emphasized the need to "break through the gender restriction" in order to pass on the tradition of Paiwan flutes (Tseng 2012:93).

<sup>18</sup> The KMT government launched the Movement of Chinese Cultural Renaissance in 1967 to reinforce Chinese ethics and culture in an effort to prove they were the true guardians of Chinese culture.

<sup>19</sup> These include the designations of Bunun polyphonic singing *pasibutbut* in 2010, Paiwan lalingedan and pakulalu flutes in 2011, and Atayal speaking-singing *lmuhuw* in 2013.

<sup>20</sup> The county government continuously registered Legeai Tjaudada (Chin Hsien-Jen 金賢仁) and Camak Paqalius (Cheng Wei-Yeh 鄭尾葉) in 2009, Pairang Pavavalung and Gilegilau Paqalius in 2010, and Sauniaw Tjuveljelj in 2011 as the preservers of Paiwan nose flutes and mouth flutes at county level.

<sup>21</sup> Based on the 2005 revision, the CCA has started registering "National Important Traditional Arts" since 2009. Paiwan flutes were registered as a "National Important Traditional Art" in 2011 due to the following reasons: (1) The instruments reflect the social organization, life style, musical characteristics, and the crafting art in traditional Paiwan society; (2) The music contains the cultural property of ethnic folk singing, which is considered valuable and endangered, and;

(3) The nominated preservers are representative in the traditional arts and crafts (National Cultural Heritage Database Management System, <https://nchdb.boch.gov.tw/assets/overview/traditionalPerformingart/20110825000003>, accessed 1 August 2018). The English translation is mine.

<sup>22</sup> Based on the 2016 revision of CHPA, “Intangible Cultural Heritage” can be further classified into five types: (1) Traditional Performing Arts (*Chuantong biao yan yishu* 傳統表演藝術); (2) Traditional Craftsmanship (*Chuantong gong yi* 傳統工藝); (3) Oral Tradition and Expressions (*Koushu chuantong* 口述傳統); (4) Folklore (*Minsu* 民俗), and; (5) Traditional Knowledge and Practices (*Chuantong zhishi yu shijian* 傳統知識與實踐). Article 3 of CHPA defines “Traditional Performing Arts” as “a traditional art that is created in front of or presented to an audience by the artist to pass down through generations among ethnic groups or geographic regions” ([https://www.boch.gov.tw/information\\_160\\_73735.html](https://www.boch.gov.tw/information_160_73735.html), accessed 10 August 2018).

<sup>23</sup> <https://law.moj.gov.tw/LawClass/LawAll.aspx?pcode=H0170135>, accessed 24 September 2019.

<sup>24</sup> Qureshi points out that association between the *sarangi* and sadness is evidenced in powerful figures such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi.

<sup>25</sup> I found this framework useful in examining how certain musical experiences evolve into collective experiences. The repeated experiences of musical and non-musical associations with the instrument, as Rancier argues, are not “limited to the individual, but grow into collective, culturally conditioned responses to the meanings that are activated by a musical instrument” (2014:385).

<sup>26</sup> Other publications on Indigenous are *High Mountain Green* (*Gaoshan qing* 高山青) during the 1980s, and *Indigenous News* (*Yuanbao* 原報) and *Hunter’s Culture* (*Lieren wenhua* 獵人文化), *Austronesian Times* (*Nandao shibao* 南島時報) during the early and the mid-1990s. Undoubtedly, these press and journal magazines, whose primary focus on socio-political issues about Indigenous peoples, was crucial in “awakening the Indigenous subjective consciousness.” However, *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly*, edited by Indigenous scholar Sun Ta-Chuan (孫大川) with eight other Indigenous scholars/writers serving on the editorial board, focuses primarily on cultural issues about Indigenous peoples (<http://nrch.culture.tw/twpedia.aspx?id=2123>, accessed September 16, 2019). For this reason, this article focuses on *Taiwan Indigenous Voices Bimonthly*.

<sup>27</sup> According to the appendix in CCA 1996.

<sup>28</sup> These activities have a strong pedagogical component in order to pass on the traditional Indigenous crafts and arts. The pedagogical activities of this kind were mostly held at Schools with Special Indigenous Focus, which refer to schools at the senior secondary level and below with a specific number or proportion of Indigenous students (Education Act for Indigenous Peoples, Article 4). For instance, World Vision International invited experts to teach about how to make and play Indigenous mouth-harps at Datong Junior High School in Yilan County (Hsieh 2004:146). Tabalong Elementary School in Hualien County also held a series of study group of Amis wooden carving (ibid).

<sup>29</sup> The CCA entrusted each cultural center to design its own festival with local characteristics. Through this, cultural centers were mobilized to use local resources and to design programs relevant to local people (Wang 2012). The National Theatre and Concert Hall also hold the

Indigenous Music and Dance Series, inviting domestic Indigenous music scholars, such as Ming Li-Kuo (明立國), to be the producer for the performances.

<sup>30</sup> It is worth noting that Vuluk later collaborated with Hu Tai-Li's project on Paiwan flutes.

<sup>31</sup> During these eight years (1995–2003), the program completed 107 projects, costing approximately 477,799,000 NTD (14.5 million USD) (Wang 2012:166).

<sup>32</sup> These included one Atayal mouth-harp education scheme, two Paiwan flute education schemes by Pingtung County Government, one Indigenous music ethnographic project (the documentary film *Sounds of Love and Sorrow*), two Indigenous weaving education schemes, one Indigenous dancing group, and one Indigenous song-and-dance group. This data is derived from the 1999 NCFTA Annual Report of Subsidy ([http://www.ncfta.gov.tw/downloadfile\\_url?url=files/201701/a1b41552-eca3-4e80-b5ab-75ff17aa3d89.ods&filename=98%E5%B9%B4%E7%AC%AC%E4%B8%80%E6%AC%A1%E8%A3%9C%E5%8A%A9%E6%A1%88%E7%B5%B1%E8%A8%88%E8%A1%A8.ods&dimg=true](http://www.ncfta.gov.tw/downloadfile_url?url=files/201701/a1b41552-eca3-4e80-b5ab-75ff17aa3d89.ods&filename=98%E5%B9%B4%E7%AC%AC%E4%B8%80%E6%AC%A1%E8%A3%9C%E5%8A%A9%E6%A1%88%E7%B5%B1%E8%A8%88%E8%A1%A8.ods&dimg=true), accessed September 16, 2019).

<sup>33</sup> Before the Academia Sinica's commission, Hu documented and filmed several Indigenous religious and performative activities, such as the Paiwan five-year ceremony maljeveq (1985), *Songs of Pasta'ay* (1989), and *Voices of Orchid Island* (1993).

<sup>34</sup> The term *nanguaq* literally means “great things.” The term *burai* is used among southern and eastern Paiwan regions. When someone sings well, the Paiwan people would say “*nanquaq a su senai*.”

<sup>35</sup> According to my conversation with a Paiwan language teacher, *samiring* means that one's words, deeds, behaviors, and dressing are all matching. If there is a girl whose speech, *nasi* (breath or life), and dressing are all complementary, that is *samiring*. It is not just about beautiful, but a holistic impression.

<sup>36</sup> These publications include *Paiwanzu de bidi yu koudi* [Paiwan Nose flutes and Mouth Flutes] (2001) and the documentary *Sounds of Love and Sorrow* (2000).

<sup>37</sup> These Paiwan flautists are Pairang Pavavalung, Rhemaliz Tuvlelem, Tsegav Talulaiats.

<sup>38</sup> Maljeveq is used to be held periodically in the majority of Paiwan communities in order to commemorate ancestors and reinforce this connection with Mt. Tjagaraus (Mt. Dawu), the sacred “homeland” (Chen 2015:24). Nowadays, it takes place once every five years. In maljeveq, “both good and evil ghosts return to the village to receive the villagers' hospitality, although some rituals are also practiced” to “prevent the possible damage brought by evil ghosts” (Hu 2005:158). Iaqu refers to a particular type of ritual songs with the non-lexical syllables “i-ya-qu,” which is typically used for maljeveq only (Chou 2013:191).

<sup>39</sup> As an important symbol of Paiwan material culture, the beads reflect the division of Paiwan social organization; some beads are restricted to the members of nobility (mamazangiljan) and middle classes only (Chen 2015:167). More details, also see Hu Chia-Yu (胡家瑜) 2012.

<sup>40</sup> Tan Shzr-Ee also points out the divination of birds in the music of Amis group in Taiwan (Tan 2012:55).

<sup>41</sup> The origin of Indigenous tourist song-and-dance can be traced back to China Youth Corps (CYC), a semi-military and social education organization that taught young Indigenous men and women and recruited members from Indigenous communities in the 1950s. The Cultural Working Group (*wenhua gongzuodui* 文化工作隊) under CYC normally performed

cheerleading-like song-and-dance to motivate local residents and spread the KMT's political ideology, which repeatedly imposed the expectation that Indigenous Peoples are a passionate, "can sing and dance well" racialized other (Chen 2007).

<sup>42</sup> According to my conversations with numerous Paiwan people, Hu's film and publications on Paiwan flutes are considered a significant contribution.

<sup>43</sup> Hu states that the sonic characters of such unique vibrato and sliding are the key to create the weeping-like sound (Hu 1996:36).

<sup>44</sup> Completing the first musicological dissertation on Paiwan music (Chou 2013), Chou has made several in-depth music investigations and maintains a specific emic perspective of Paiwan music. As a Paiwan scholar who is familiar with Paiwan language, Chou has been an active speaker at many lectures and performance events of Paiwan music, as well as a key coordinator to the transmission of Paiwan flutes.

<sup>45</sup> Nian Siou-Ling was a key coordinator in assisting the interviews with Paiwan flautists and the translation of Paiwan language for the 1995 Preservation Project (Hu et al. 2001:9). As a local member of Piuma community, Nian is currently the executive secretary of Community Development Association of Piuma community.

<sup>46</sup> There are several CDs described as Indigenous music based on its social function or musicological characteristics of homophonic, harmonic, and polyphonic textures. Examples include *The Songs of the Paiwan Tribe*, *The Music of Aborigines on Taiwan Island, Vol. 7* (1994).

<sup>47</sup> France- and Japan-trained Taiwanese ethnomusicologist Hsu Chang-Hui escorted a troupe of Indigenous peoples on a performance tour of Europe in 1988. A recording of the performance in Paris was made. The album *Polyphonies Vocales Des Aborigènes De Taiwan* compiled selections from the recording of this performance and Hsu's other field recordings in 1978 as part of a folksong collection project (Tan 2012).

<sup>48</sup> In fact, some of the Paiwan recordings on vinyl records during the 1960s featured Chinese song titles that do not particularly contain themes of love or sorrow. Ring Ring Record, a Taiwanese local record label, produced many vinyl records of Indigenous songs during the 1960s. For instance, the song "iluwananayau" (FL958-2405) was translated as "*Chui di huanxing*" (literally "Awakening with the flute playing" 吹笛喚醒), which features a Paiwan folk song with the accompaniment of the mouth flute. It is worth noting that many of the Paiwan song titles are non-lexical syllables, so they were translated into Chinese based on either its social functions or auditory experiences. For example, "Wedding song," "Love song," and "Song of Harvest Festival" (FL-957A~FL-959B).

<sup>49</sup> For example, these song titles include "*Lianmu nide rongyan nide meili*" (戀慕你的容顏你的美麗) ["Admiring the Beauty of Your Countenance"] and "*Chuanchang ailian de xiongdi*" (傳唱愛戀的兄弟) ["Brothers Who Sing of Love and Longing"]. It is worth noting that the track "*Chuanchang ailian de xiongdi*" features a highly similar rendition with the track labeled "Twin-pipe flute performed by Pairang." in Hu's 2001 CD.

<sup>50</sup> For instance, the book mentions that Paiwan men typically play the "sorrowful and lonely tune" to move the hearts of their beloved (Chen 2017:26).

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## ***Butterfly in Bombay: Operatic Culture and British Identity During the Raj and Beyond***

**Trevor R. Nelson**

E. M. Forster's colonial novel *A Passage to India* is brimming with music, though almost exclusively Western styles. Even as one might expect some mention of Indian music within this volume depicting the life of a colonial subject at the height of the British *Raj*, Forster's position as an outsider prevented him from giving adequate space to the sounds of native Indian communities. The one mention of indigenous music is an aside, just another instance of Mrs. Moore wanting to get to know "the real India" (Forster 1924:27). Elsewhere, the author describes amateur orchestras populated by British expatriates; Songs and *entr'acte* music for European dramas also get their due (ibid.:17, 22). Forster even uses Western music as a point of comparison, describing one character as having so little regard to all around her that she treated the entire subcontinent "as a comic opera" (ibid.:49). This quip is the only mention of opera—a genre considered by many in the nineteenth century to be the height of Western musical pursuit—in the entire novel. In the soundscape of *A Passage to India*, where Western music easily prevails, opera only plays a referential role. Forster's tale is far from the definitive statement on Western music-making in India under British rule, as demonstrated by many musicological studies (Head 1985; Farrell 1997; Woodfield 2000; Walton 2019); yet, it does raise a fundamental question: what role did opera play in the lives of Britons living in India during the Raj?

Scholars have made clear that when a European power took over land in the age of colonialism, one of the first acts of establishing control was the formation of cultural institutions (Horn 1998; Irving 2012). Many imperial powers, including Britain, followed this model across the world over the last millennium; examples of this include the teaching of Shakespeare in South Africa or the use of Tonic Sol-Fa music solmization in Madagascar (Johnson 1995, McGuire 2009). During the early days of colonial settlement, there was great fear that Europeans would "fall victim" to the wonders of "exotic" locales. In India, the colonial government was quick to instill British institutions to maintain a sense of national identity, keeping the expatriate citizenry distinctly European in sensibility.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Western music gained a secure hold in the form of amateur orchestras and madrigal societies, an influence still felt today through the music of Bollywood. Furthermore, as Hannah Marsden has demonstrated, to this day, Western

music still plays a role in debates about what it means to be Indian (2018:136). What role did opera—the genre of Western music most closely tied with notions of musical excellence and modernity at the height of British imperialism—play in British identity formation during the Raj?

In this article, I consider the nature of Western opera and the culture surrounding its performance in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, as well as reflect on its legacy in South Asia today. After reviewing the many concerns of early British settlers in India about the need for a robust, pseudo-European cultural sphere, I trace existing accounts of music-making among British expatriate communities during the mid- to late-1800s, honing in on operatic resonances. I draw extensively from the *Times of India*, the largest English-language newspaper on the subcontinent, based in Bombay (now Mumbai).<sup>2</sup> By engaging with the presence and absence of Western cultural forms in India, one can better understand the cultural capital of certain artistic ventures during and after colonial rule. These notions of value are essential when considering India's only surviving opera house: the Royal Opera House in Mumbai. This site, which underwent a massive renovation in the early 2010s, continues to play a role in the cultural life of the city. This study complements the quickly-expanding body of literature on opera and operatic performance outside of the West, including India (Centrangolo 2016; André 2018; Liao 2019), studies on Western classical music and opera in India (Marsden 2018; Walton 2019), and scholarship on the influence of Indian music and culture on British musical life (Farrell 1997; Ghuman 2014). This article differs, however, by tracking the role of opera in imperial identity formation and deconstruction over a period of 150 years, rather than providing brief snapshots in time.

I argue that even though opera was only one small element of British expatriate cultural life during the 250 years of colonial occupation, the desire of Britons living in India to keep up with Europe's music and cultural "progress" kept the dream of opera in Bombay alive into the 1930s. Furthermore, the *idea* of opera, rather than the actual performance of the genre, continues to exert weight on revitalization efforts in certain enclaves of India today. Of course, this symbolism is closely tied to the role of the West in global power structures to this day. This article scratches the surface of opera within India, glossing over many details, events, and people essential in the genre's rise and fall on the subcontinent. Even in light of these weaknesses, this is a necessary step in fostering a more nuanced history of Western opera in India.

### A (Brief) History of Western Music in India

In the seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, European settlement in India was slow. Following Queen Elizabeth I's granting of a royal charter to the East India Company in 1600, the English set their trade sights on Qing China and the Indian subcontinent (Canny 1998:4). Unlike the Dominion of Canada and the other American territories, there was little intention of turning India into a settler colony. It was only in the 1760s that the British began to explore the possibility of long-term settlement, and even then, encampments remained only in coastal areas surrounding the cities of Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, and Tellicherry (now Thalassery) (Ray 1998:510). Even as the economies of these ports grew, populations remained quite small; Linda Colley reasons that there were typically just around 200 Europeans in India at any given time until the mid-eighteenth century (2002:248–51).

With so few Europeans in India, every man counted and defection was a real concern. The colonial ethos, fueled by essentialist beliefs about race and gender, led many East India Company employees to venture into spaces outside of British control. Officials were quite worried that the unfamiliar nature of South Asia would cause these young men to lose both their moral virtue and national identity: it became commonplace for those stationed in India to refer to themselves as “Indian,” rather than English or British (ibid.:254). Back in London, the rise of the *nabob* community—men who returned to Britain after colonial service yet retained some cultural practices from India—made this concern tangible, with Tillman W. Nechtman arguing that nabobs were crucial in shaping proper and improper modes of Britishness in both the colony and the metropole (2010:16). With their attachment to brightly-colored clothes and spicy food, nabobs made evident the necessity of asserting British culture abroad, if only so the British Isles could remain, in the official mind, a safe and clean oasis.

Music played a crucial role in this cultural assertion. By the 1750s, the British strongholds were growing larger by the day; many men were starting to bring families to India, which led to a surge of Western musicking on the subcontinent. Ian Woodfield notes that domestic music-making in Calcutta closely mirrored culture in London due to a desire to show off middle-class wealth (2000:6). Obtaining quality instruments, however, remained a significant hurdle. It took close to six months for any instruments to arrive from Europe, yet these were manufactured with milder climates in mind; heat and

humidity caused nearly half of all keyboard instruments to break within one year (ibid.:20).

Music thus became a way of controlling British space. Using portraiture, Richard Leppert argues that bringing cultural comforts like keyboards and sheet music to settlements became a way for British officials to prove that colonies were safe. In paintings of prominent British expatriate families, artists frequently added musical objects, which Leppert sees as symbolic of order and rationalization. This performative act became a way of asserting British cultural triumph over the subcontinent (Leppert 1989:102). Portraits can tell us of the presence of music, but leave much of the performance practice a mystery. For that, one must look elsewhere, with press coverage being a prime option.

Music societies began forming in the major British strongholds beginning in the 1760s. Raymond Head notes that choral singing was the most popular, with groups performing familiar fare such as folk songs and ballads. Instrumental ensembles were much rarer, as it was challenging to find enough skilled musicians to fill out an orchestra. These groups tended toward repertoire similar to their European counterparts, reading the music of Haydn, Corelli, and J. C. Bach. Calcutta orchestras even performed Handel's *Messiah* at least twice—once in 1786 and again in 1797 (Head 1985:549).

Reviews of these performances in the English-language *Calcutta Gazette* point to a growing desire among the British expatriate community for more spectacle and wonderment. When evaluating the 1786 *Messiah* performance, one critic remarked that the level of execution would have garnered applause “in any theatre in Europe and the management of the choruses exceeded every expectation” (18 May 1786, quoted in Head 1985:551). Just as domestic music-making became symbolic of the British impulse to make India culturally similar to the metropole, performing music with grander proportions signified the ever-increasing power the British exerted across the subcontinent. Their ability to bring together large instrumental and vocal forces made evident their growing numbers in South Asia, as well as the British hankering to make Indian port cities places of trade and European culture. Symphonies and oratorios indeed were potent tools for demonstrating this yearning, but during the nineteenth century, opera became a dominant symbol of British rule.

### **The Curtain Rises**

By the end of the eighteenth-century, commentators began to note the lack of opera in India, even as the genre succeeded across Europe and into the Americas. Many British



expatriates came to consider this a significant problem. Opera, particularly the Italian variety, was an essential cultural form for them, even if just for seeing and being seen (Hall-Witt 2007); if expatriates ever hoped to return to Britain, they had to stay informed of the newest generic trends either through detailed letters from friends or family back in Europe or by undertaking crash-courses upon their homecoming. Woodfield even notes a woman from the 1780s who refused to move to Calcutta with her husband due to the lack of opera (2000:198). The British expatriate elite came to realize that if India was to become a place of permanent British settlement then opera should be instituted within the major metropolitan areas.

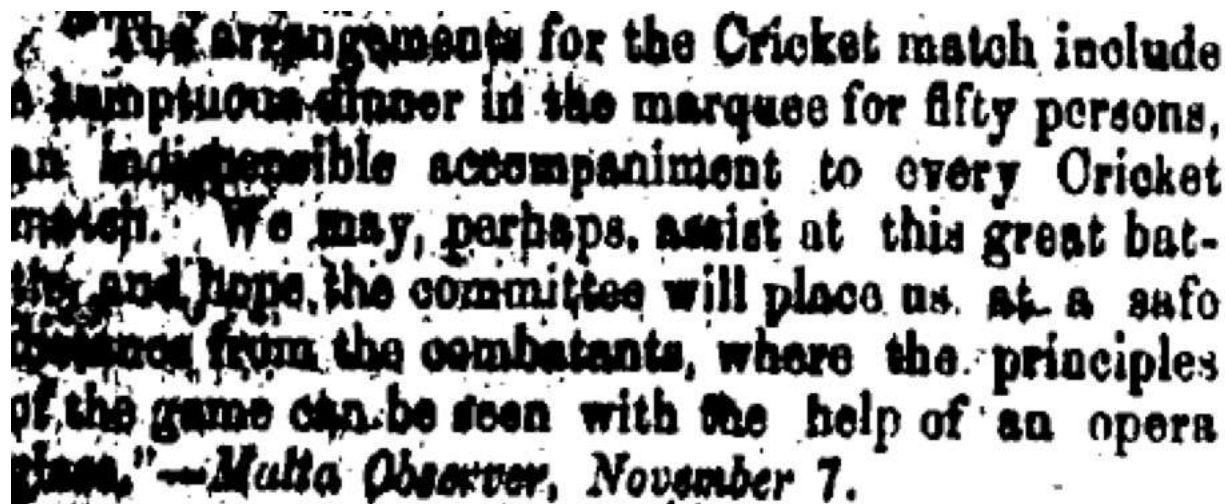
Opera arias and overtures became a dominant musical form in European enclaves. Receipts and pay records from music distributors in Calcutta and Bombay make clear that some of their top-selling products were operatic excerpts. These arrangements, intended for performance in the home, became a way for ruling-class families to stay abreast of operatic developments back in Europe. It was even a favorite hobby amongst bored wives to teach their songbirds hit tunes from new works. There is no evidence as to how this practice began or if it was unique to the Indian context, but it undoubtedly points toward a level of domestic comfort felt by some European women; not only was India safe for them, but they were able to conquer the native beasts (ibid.:32). Like the tiger-skin adornments standard in their homes, Indian songbirds chirping out the latest Mozart air signified a conquering of the landscape.

No avian mimicry, however, could match the allure of an operatic diva. It is difficult to pinpoint precisely the first full staging of a Western opera in India. Raymond Head mentions an 1831 performance of *Don Giovanni* in Calcutta, yet does not supply any documentation or any further evidence to support this claim (1985:552). Similarly, Benjamin Walton notes that semi-staged performances of *L'italiana in Algeri* in Calcutta in 1836 and 1843 were quite important for artistic life in the city (2019:123–26). Thus, we can tentatively pinpoint the 1830s as the beginning of staged opera's influence in certain areas of India.

Press coverage provides a great way to uncover this forgotten history. *The Times of India*, which began publishing in 1838, catered to the British expatriate community in Bombay. While Calcutta had been the seat of British power in India, during the nineteenth century, Bombay and other cities were growing in influence (Washbrook 2010:199). It also bears mentioning that as the *Times of India* was an English-language paper and run by

Europeans living in India, its purview was limited, focusing almost exclusively on the goings-on within European enclaves. To only look at the *Times* when attempting to fully understand musical life in colonial India would be an error. The *Times* does, however, provide a clear projection of the ideals valued by British expatriates during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While the remainder of this article will focus on operatic life in Bombay, other cities across British India certainly had operatic cultures of their own; Partha Chatterjee even describes how the British used Italian opera as a pedagogical tool at the New Bengali Theatre of Calcutta (2012:228).

Advertisements from the 1860s make clear the growing market for opera in India. The China Depot and General Emporium in central Bombay listed opera glasses prominently in their “Classified Advertisements” published ten times during July 1861. The supplier pointed out that these were imported directly from Paris and London (*ToI*, 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 17, 18, 23, and 24 July 1861). Opera glasses certainly have many uses outside a theatre—a later article titled “A Portuguese view of cricket,” reprinted from the *Malta Observer*, described the technology being used to watch a match—but these prominent advertisements allude to the presence for some market for operatic commodities (*ToI* 25 December 1861:4; see Figure 1).



**The arrangements for the Cricket match include a sumptuous dinner in the marquee for fifty persons, an indispensable accompaniment to every Cricket match. We may, perhaps, assist at this great battle, and hope the committee will place us at a safe distance from the combatants, where the principles of the game can be seen with the help of an opera glass."—Malta Observer, November 7.**

Figure 1. Excerpt of article describing a cricket match being viewed via opera glasses. Source: *Times of India*, 25 December 1861, p. 4.

In August 1861, the *Times* published “Our Paris Correspondence,” a series of letters from the French capital; one alerted the Bombay readership of the construction of the new *Opéra*. The note’s author described how none of his readers would be able to find their

way around Paris anymore due to the massive amounts of construction going on back in Europe (*ToI* 10 August 1861:2; see Figure 2). It is clear that Europeans in Bombay would be interested in learning about the goings-on in one of Europe's cultural centers, as well as the new musical destinations to visit upon their return to the West.

None of you will be able to find your way about Paris when you return here; the whole city is being pulled down and rebuilt. Assuredly, if Gibbon be right that Rome perished from excess of luxury, Paris must be near its fall, for luxurious habits here have encroached upon all classes. The workmen complain as they always will complain; but they never had so fine a time of it as now. I watched them this morning building the new Opera House. They have a small steam engine which hoists up all the blocks of stone, which they roll lazily into their places; below ~~at~~ women vending ice at two sous (one penny), and distributing coffee. Nor have the rich much reason to complain. The ground on which the Opera stands is sold for 2000*fr.* £ (80) the square yard; and M<sup>de</sup>. de Pontalba, who bought her house in the Place Vendome ten years ago for £ 26,000, has just sold it for £ 64,000. Well, these are fine times; but bread, and meat, and wine are at fabulous prices also; so are lodgings. The Marquis of Hertford draws nearly 10,000 £ a year from the house which he lately built at the corner of the Rue Michodiere. The catastrophe, or cataclysm, must come they say. However, the comet has not brought it in its train, for the luminary is fast disappearing; instead of dragging at each remove a lengthening chain, its tail is becoming small by degrees and beautifully less; it scarcely now continues to keep up a decent appearance in the heavens, and is cut out by the evening star.

Figure 2. Excerpt from "Our Paris Correspondence" describing construction taking place in the city, including the *Opéra*. Source: *Times of India*, 10 August 1861, p. 2.

Solo singers and instrumental groups also performed operatic tunes frequently. In December 1861, Mr. E. J. Martinnant Jr. presented a concert at Bombay's town hall; it

was quite an event, and rumors circulated beforehand that Bombay's Governor-general would be in attendance. The *Times* published the concert program beforehand and it featured numerous selections from English and Italian operas. Most were overtures or arrangements of tunes for various instrumental trios. American parlor song also featured prominently in the evening's festivities, and like all good Victorian affairs, the concert was to end with "God Save the Queen" (*ToI* 17 December 1861:4; see Figure 3). The presence of names like Donizetti and Rossini without any explanation points to the ubiquitous nature of their works in bourgeois spaces across the globe.

We beg to remind our readers that the Vocal and Instrumental Concert of Mr. E. J. Martinnant, Junr. takes place this evening at the Town Hall. As it is given under the Patronage of Sir George Clerk, and as His Excellency we believe will honor the occasion with his presence, no doubt Mr. Martinnant will have a numerous audience. The following is the

**PROGRAMME OF THE EVENING.**

PART I.

OVERTURE, "Guy Mannering" (Bishop)	BAND.
SOLO ON THE VIOLIN, "Fantasia Selections from the Opera of 'Lurline' (H. Becker) with piano accompaniment	MR. MARTIN- NANT.
CHORUS, "The Pirate Queen" (Fraser)	SERENADERS.
SOLO ON THE CLARINET.—AIR "O Cara Memoria" with brilliant variations (Jwan Muller) with piano accompaniment	MR. L. PERRET.
SONG, "Annie Laurie," with piano accompaniment and sung by	MR. J. T. MOR- TON.
GRAND TRIO FOR THE CLARINET, VIOLIN AND PIANO "Fantasia Sur Les Motifs del opera Elisir D'Amour" (Donizetti)	MESSES. PERRET MARTINANT, AND SWAN- SEGER.
SONG AND CHORUS, "I'm off to Charlestown" (Foster)	SERENADERS.
SOLO ON THE PIANO "Partant pour La Syrie" with brilliant variations (Hertz)	MR. MARTIN- NANT.

PART II.

OVERTURE, "L'italien de Alger" (Rossini)	BAND.
SOLO ON THE VIOLIN, "Auld Robin Gray" with variations (Fryer)	MR. MARTIN- NANT.
SONG AND CHORUS, "Oh Boys! Carry me Long" (Foster)	SERENADERS.
SOLO ON THE CLARINET, Divertissement Sur Les Motifs del opera Lucrezia Borgia. (Donizetti) and arranged by Mr. Perret with piano accompaniment	MR. L. PER- RET.
SONG, "Beautiful Star" with Piano accompaniment (Sayers) and sung by	MR. J. T. MOR- TON.
SOLO ON THE PIANO, "Capriccio in A." (Hertz)	MR. SWANSEGER.
SONG AND CHORUS, "Camptown Races"—(Foster)	SERENADERS.
SOLO ON THE VIOLIN, "Le Roi D. Yvetot" (N. Louis) with brilliant variations, and piano accompaniment	MR. MARTIN- NANT.

**GOD SAVE THE QUEEN.**

To commence precisely at half-past 8.

Figure 3. Concert announcement and program. *Times of India*, 18 December 1861, p. 3.

These three brief operatic mentions from 1861 show that among the British expatriate community of Bombay, there was both a familiarity with and desire to hear Western opera. What is missing, of course, are records of fully-staged performances. Many obstacles prevented the formation of an excellent company or regular seasons of operatic programming in India. Writing in 1865, one commentator noted the climate was a significant barrier to hearing great music on the subcontinent: “Nowhere else, in the British dependencies, if we except the Mediterranean, is there, for definite reasons, a more equable high temperature. No time is more favorable than the evening for the development of those soothing impressions of melancholy resignation and tenderness which it is so peculiarly the province of music to inspire” (*ToI* 3 July 1865:3). To cope with the climate, bands and orchestras increased their brass sections while limiting their winds and strings. In turn, orchestral and operatic works were perverted, morphed into martial expressions of might. The anonymous *Times* author asserts that they would love to hear the “airy flights of the Italian school as represented by Rossini, Donizetti, and the simple and intellectual Bellini,” but would rather not if too many brass players tainted the orchestra (*ibid.*).

Aside from concerns over instrumentation, performance venues were also lacking in Bombay; there were few places capable of hosting a fully-staged opera, or even large concerts. Most public performances had to take place outside or in smaller venues. These halls were not suitable for more extravagant productions or lavish enough to cater to the touring demands of prominent European performers. As the British became more comfortable with their position of power in India, their expected standard of living grew in tandem. They became unable to make do with performance practices of the past. As writers in the *Times* made clear, Indian orchestras had to live up to the standards set by their European counterparts to make expatriates happy with their living situations in Bombay (*ibid.*).

A political and cultural turning point came in 1876 when Queen Victoria became Empress of India. Even as the British brought India under formal control in June 1858, it was the passing of the Royal Titles act of 1876 and the Delhi Durbar of 1877 which made plain to Britons living at home and abroad that India was now part of the UK’s growing formal empire. By that time, entrepreneurs had erected larger performance spaces capable of hosting opera stagings; two prominent examples were the Grant Road Theatre and the Hall within the Framjee Cowasjee Institute. In 1878, both venues hosted performances of

the Royal Italian Opera company touring throughout India under the director of a man called Signor Cagli. The company first gave a series of concert performances at the Framjee Cowasjee Hall, about which the *Times* raved:

To those unaccustomed for sometime to anything but the ordinary dilettante singing, with its slovenly accompaniments, forced or exaggerated expression robbed from the time and the general expression it leaves of exertion and laboured study, the crisp time, facile execution, and properly modulated expression of some of Signor Cagli's artistes must prove a rare treat. (*ToI* 28 November 1878:2)

The article went on to describe how due to the success of the original concerts, the company was able to secure a temporary contract with the Grant Road Theatre to give a series of fully-staged Italian operas. In December, the company mounted what the *Times* called a "little season," which opened with Verdi's *Il trovatore* and closed with Donizetti's *La favorita* (*ToI* 2 December 1878:2; *ToI* 6 January 1879). Other highlights included *Don Pasquale*, *Ernani*, and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (*ToI* 13 December 1878:2; *ToI* 20 December 1878:2; *ToI* 30 December 1878:2). Advertisements for the season ran daily in the *Times*, with ticket prices ranging from one to five rupees (*ToI* 3 December 1878:1).

Reviews of these performances were mostly positive, noting that even if the prima donnas did not match the quality of singing at La Scala or Bayreuth, the operas were still the highlight of Bombay's cultural season. Some spectators, however, were not pleased that Italian opera was becoming so prominent. In a letter to the editor, one individual wrote:

I am very fond of music, and especially operatic music, but it is fearfully hard work to have to sit through a piece and to be utterly in the dark as to what the actors are arriving at until you read an account of it in the next day's paper. Italian is no doubt a beautiful language, but what is the good if you are not put in a fair position to appreciate it? I am not ashamed to confess that I don't speak Italian, nor understand a word of it when spoken, and no doubt nineteen-twentieths of the house are in the same position. (*ToI* 18 December 1876)

The author, calling him- or herself "Ignoramus," goes on to say that Bombay music shops no longer carry opera scores nor librettos, which just made the Italian operas much too challenging to understand; "Ignoramus" suggested a season of English opera or that the

*Times* should publish a short synopsis of each evening's opera before it occurred. The editor kindly replied that "the plots of most of the operas are so well known that it is scarcely necessary to reproduce them" (ibid.).

### THE ITALIAN OPERA COMPANY.

THE Bombay public will be pleased to hear that Signor Cagli's company of singers have made arrangements to give a series of Italian Operas at the Grant Road Theatre, beginning next Saturday. We have hitherto contented ourselves with merely a few passing remarks on the entertainments he has been giving us the last week, but now that we are to be regaled with elaborate performances, it is worth while to notice more fully the capabilities of this troupe. In Bombay we are accustomed to a good deal of amateur singing, much of which is above the average, and it needs an occasional visit, such as that of Signor Cagli's virtuosi, to recall to us the vast gap between the singing of even an accomplished dilettante and that of an ordinary professional. The world, and perhaps, too, the amateur also, will have it that talent of this sort is but a useful and pleasant social attribute, so that these performances degenerate into a pleading for the meaningless thanks of an appreciative after-dinner throng, whose voices—

"Low with fashion, not with feeling, softly freighted  
"All the air about the windows with elastic laughter sweet."

The professional, who trusts to his voice for his living, must cultivate and use his advantages in a very different manner. To those unaccustomed for sometime to anything but the ordinary dilettante singing, with its slovenly accompaniments, forced and exaggerated expression robbed from the time, and the general impression it leaves of exertion and laboured study, the crisp time, facile execution, and properly modulated expression of some of Signor Cagli's artistes must prove a rare treat. We may mention, *en passant*, that not the least pleasing part of the performances has been the masterly way in which Signor Guarneri played the accompaniments, particularly, if we remember that through all the rippling merriment of Rossini's brilliant allegro passages, he had to sustain the double rôle of leader and follower.

Figure 4 (left). Excerpt from *Times of India* article announcing the Royal Italian Opera Company staying in Bombay for a small opera season. 28 November 1878, p. 2.

Figure 5 (below). Letter to the editor of *Times of India*. 18 December 1878.

### THE ITALIAN OPERA COMPANY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES OF INDIA.

SIR,—I have been several times to the operas, and have tried to enjoy them. I am very fond of music, and especially of operatic music, but it is fearfully hard work to have to sit through a piece and to be utterly in the dark as to what the actors are arriving at until you read an account of it in the next day's paper.

Italian is no doubt a beautiful language, but what is the good if you are not put in a fair position to appreciate it? I am not ashamed to confess that I don't speak Italian, nor understand a word of it when spoken, and no doubt nineteen-twentieths of the house are in the same predicament. But if I were made acquainted with the plot of the piece, so as to be able to follow the incidents of each scene with tolerable accuracy, the want of knowledge of the language would be easily got over. I should be in a better position to appreciate the performance and truthfully to applaud it. There seems to be none of the operas (music and words) obtainable at the music shops, could you not therefore take pity on my ignorance and arrange to publish in the paper each day before the performance a short description of the opera?

Dec. 16.

IGNORAMUS.

\* \* \* The plots of most of the operas are so well known, that it is scarcely necessary to reproduce them.—Ed T. or I.

There is little discussion of the audience makeup for these operas aside from a snide remark that the clothes worn by spectators got more elaborate the further up the boxes your eyes went (*ToI* 30 December 1878:2). The British expatriate public, which had been yearning for greater access to Italian opera and other hallmarks of European culture, was finally getting what it wanted.

These performances of European opera were occurring alongside other forms of theatrical entertainment, notably Parsi stage dramas. Throughout the Victorian era, there were many touring melodrama troupes that stopped in port cities such as Bombay where they performed European works for colonial elites, as well as some members of the Indian aristocracy. Eventually members of the Parsi community established their own companies, adapting canonic melodramas to better suit their Indian audiences (Hansen 2016:17; see also 2003, 2013). While opera existed alongside these art forms, Parsi theatre gained a much stronger foothold and established itself as the dominant stage genre of the Raj, at least in large cities. And yet there was a degree of cross-pollination; following the tours of opera companies, some Parsi theatre owners began to market their own productions as operas to profit from the hype and prestige of the foreign tours (Hansen 2016:24). Even as Parsi theatre and other hybrid forms of culture set down deep roots in Bombay, operatic culture in the city remained a game of imports, mirroring the situation in London (Rodmell 2013:8, 185).

Additionally, opera companies were competing against forms of popular entertainment. During the late nineteenth century, blackface minstrel shows became quite prominent in major cities around India. While these Indian minstrel shows were closer to the London versions than their American counterparts, the musical makeup contained the expected mix of parlor song, comic acts, and the occasional opera aria, though these opera numbers were frequently performed as parodies intended to negatively stereotype people with black skin (Shope 2016:36; see also Norris 2007). The popularity of minstrelsy relied, in part, on the genre's acclaim in London, though performers did frequently adapt their routines to reference local issues and stereotypes about Indian ethnic groups (Shope 2016:8). In this way, the genre was similar to opera, as through growing transnational entertainment circuits, British expatriates could keep abreast of fashionable music styles even while away from the metropole.



Expatriate elites were unreservedly willing to use their economic capital to make their home as comfortable as possible, even if that meant importing an operatic culture foreign to them, just like their brethren back in Britain. So while opera was never as popular as other forms of theatre in Bombay, the coverage of this “small season” in the *Times* makes it quite plain that opera had a foothold in India.

### **The Royal Opera House Then...**

Demand for European opera in Bombay only increased during the *fin-de-siècle* as new venues capable of staging music dramas continued to spring up across the city.

International travel also became more accessible and stable; the rise of steamships and the standardization of the imperial railroad system made it possible for touring companies to stop in the area with more frequency and stay for extended periods (Headrick 1981).

For British expatriates, access to opera as a status symbol, was a way of asserting British identity even away from the metropole. Notorious for importing their music for centuries, Britons were doing the same even when divorced from the British Isles. The time had come for a space dedicated to opera performances in Bombay: the Royal Opera House.

Contemporary records of the space’s earlier days are scarce. Construction took place between 1909 and 1912, with King George V inaugurating the building in 1911 while in India for his Durbar. The earliest mention of the space in the *Times* came in 1911, though opera was not the spectacle mentioned: “A crowded attendance was present as the opening of Mr. Bandmann’s new Bombay theatre, the Royal Opera House, New Queen’s Road, on Saturday evening, to see the colored cinematograph pictures taken on the new system called kinemacolor” (*ToI* 10 July 1911:4). Kinemacolor, the first successful color motion picture process, only a few years old in 1911, was already making a splash in the Raj (McKernan 2013:100–104). Cinema first arrived in Bombay in 1896 and over the next two decades, an industry of Indian-created films sprung up across the city. Again, the Parsis were prominent in the development and circulation of these films in the early-twentieth century (Bose 2006:39–42). These early films did not have synchronized sound, but their technological novelty drew great crowds from across Bombay. As such, it is hardly surprising that a new hall like the Royal Opera House would showcase advances in film.

And yet, in this instance, we witness a collapse. For over a century, the British expatriate community was quite desperate for access to one of the triumphs of Western musical modernity, leading to the construction of a new hall dedicated to opera. By the time of the

Royal Opera House's construction, however, other media forms were becoming prominent. Even as builders outfitted the space with all the accoutrements of operatic modernity, such as a lowered orchestra pit, it was immediately forced to play catch-up and outfit itself for the performance of other art forms. In this way, the Royal Opera House is similar to many halls built in America during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. These sites, invariably called opera houses, hosted a panoply of genres including cinema, theatre, and minstrelsy, and came to become a sort of community center (Condee 2004:4). Even London's Covent Garden, on occasion, served as a screening venue for films in the 1920s (Wilson 2019:104). The fact that the first mention of Bombay's Royal Opera House in the *Times* is not actually about operatic performance indicates that a similar multi-use aesthetic was at play here as well.

This disjuncture still leaves the question of why to label the hall an Opera House and what value that title carried. Chatterjee, speaking of the Indian nationalist context, argues that activists selectively chose elements of Western modernity and brought them into the fold of their political agenda (1989:240; see also 1993). A related negotiation with forms of modernity was occurring among the Britons in India at the same time. Expatriates, separated from the metropole, were continually forging their identity within not only their geographic space (the Indian subcontinent) but also the hierarchy of the British Empire. They were undeniably British, yet their displacement also marked them as Others in the pecking order of European sensibility, complicating the supposed binary opposition between metropole and colony (Stoler and Cooper 1997). In the nineteenth century, Western elites considered opera the marker *par excellence* of a European modernity, but at the dawn of the twentieth century, the art form was quickly becoming outdated in the eyes of many, prompting the rise of *verismo* (Wilson 2007; Schwartz 2009). By keeping the name "Opera House," the owners and patrons aligned themselves with the cosmopolitan capital and ideals of valorized European art forms. It was less about the actual performance of opera than it was about the aura of the access to opera and its connected Western cultural prestige. Both the Royal Opera House and British expatriates during the Raj exemplified the changing demands of "high culture" during the early-twentieth century, as well as how art forms shifted to meet the ebbs and flows of modernity.

Nevertheless, the Royal Opera House became a site of numerous operatic performances. Throughout the 1920s, the space hosted various touring companies from Italy, Germany, Russia, and the UK. These groups tended to perform the canonical bulwarks, though they were not afraid of breaking out of their national repertoires; one Italian company gave an

“enthusiastic” performance of *Carmen* (*ToI* 15 December 1924:7), and the Russian Grand Opera staged Gounod’s *Roméo et Juliette* (*ToI* 30 April 1920:10). The works of Puccini and Verdi seem to have been the most popular, along with operas featuring blatant themes of exoticism and cultural domination (e.g. *Carmen*, *Madama Butterfly*). Reviewers did not comment on audience reactions to these problematic aspects; discussions tended to focus on the quality of the performance rather than the opera as work. Performers even stretched generic labels at times. In 1929, the Royal Opera House hosted Santoro’s Italian Marionettes; they performed a series of tableaux drawn from opera, though the only work mentioned by name was Lehár’s *The Merry Widow*. A review described the event as “extremely clever, quite out of the ordinary run of entertainment,” noting that “the singing by a party of opera singers was very well done” (*ToI* 15 March 1929:10; see Figure 6).

## MARIONETTE SHOW AT ROYAL OPERA HOUSE.

### A FINE PERFORMANCE.

Santoro's Italian Marionettes show at the Royal Opera House on Thursday was extremely clever, quite out of the ordinary run of entertainments. The manipulation of the figures was much better than one usually expects from a show of this kind and caused much merriment in the audience. The singing by a party of opera singers was very well done.

The first item on the programme was a condensed version of the musical comedy “Merry Widow” which was much appreciated, and was followed by a tableaux, representing a scene in a Spanish town at the time of the Inquisition. The spirit of darkness gloats over the heavily chained spirit of light who by a supreme effort free herself from her fetters and eventually vanquishes darkness. The next tableaux shows Egyptian trumpeters playing the Excelsior Hymn followed by the dancers of the Ballett, who dance very well.

Figure 6. Excerpt from review of marionette performance. Source: *Times of India*, 15 March 1929, p. 10.

By the mid-1930s, however, the tide had shifted. The public's desire to see opera in Bombay was lessening and the Royal Opera House did not see the business it was used to during the 20s, partially due to the growing popular music and jazz market (Shope 2016; Fernandes 2012). This fading mirrored shifts in operatic practice in Europe, where critics saw the death of Puccini as a fundamental end of opera, a genre which, despite best efforts, failed to live up to the promises of the modern world (Wilson 2007:201). These changes happened alongside debates in 1920s Britain about the status of opera: was the genre too elitist? Should it remain a symbol of high culture—if it even ever existed as such (Wilson 2019)? Just like citizens in Britain, expatriates in Bombay were finding opera stuffy and too high-class—even as they were trying to project their own status as elites in India and beyond. These disagreements over the place of opera reflected a general dissatisfaction with high culture in the 1930s across Europe and among British opera goers living in India, a situation further complicated by the rise of new forms of entertainment, most notably film.

With the rise of synchronized sound in films during the late 1920s and into the 30s, music became an indispensable part of Indian cinema. Early examples drew mostly from the Parsi theatre tradition, but, as Anna Morcom describes, the mingling of Indian and Western musical traditions in cities like Bombay and Calcutta led to a form of hybridity in most *filmī*, which resulted in a style of music unique to the emerging Hindi cinema industry (2007:4–6). While it is impossible to pinpoint film as the sole—or even dominant—reason that opera never gained a stronger foothold in Bombay in the early-twentieth century, I am confident that this new form of entertainment and its technological wonders certainly attracted some spectators away from the opera house.

It bears mentioning that the British population in Bombay was becoming a smaller minority all the time. I have not been able to access any definitive records regarding the number of Britons in Bombay, but the 1931 Indian census notes that of the 1.25 million people in Bombay, 1.8% of the population was Christian, or around 22,840 persons (Shirras 1935: 436, 446). Of course, not all of these Christians were British and not all Britons were Christian, but these figures give some indication of the demographics of Bombay. Moreover, there were non-British communities in India deeply connected to Western forms of music-making. I have already mentioned the role of Parsis in theatre and film, and additionally there were the Goans, with strong connections to American popular music and jazz (Shope 2016). As most reviews of music performances do not discuss audience makeup, it is impossible to know what proportion of the opera audience was British and what was Indian, but in all likelihood, a significant and growing number

of audience members would not have been British—a major change from just fifty years earlier.

On February 6, 1936, the *Times* published a four-page “special supplement” documenting a series of renovations undertaken at the Royal Opera House which turned the hall into a single-screen cinema. To call this coverage a study in the marketing of new technology would be an understatement. The article outlines a brief history of the space, as well as the history of English dramatic arts in Bombay more inclusively. The author is careful to dispel any misconceptions about the place of the venue in the lives of *all* Indians:

For a long time a mistaken impression about the theatre seemed to prevail among a certain class of Indians. The belief seemed to be that the place was intended mainly for Europeans, and that the standard of entertainment was, to use a common by expressive American term, ‘highbrow’, or above the level of taste of the average entertainment seeker in an Indian city. From time to time the proprietor made efforts to dispel this misconception, to show that the Opera House was open to all decent theatre-goers., but such efforts were never entirely successful. The impression still lingered, and this of course affected the income of the theatre (*ToI* 6 February 1936:6; see Figure 7).



Figure 7. Cover from Royal Opera House renovation special supplement. Source: *Times of India*, 6 February 1936, p. 6.

The article goes on to explain that because of the Royal Opera House's superb acoustics, it is the only hall in India capable of showcasing the "talkies" the way they were intended to be heard. Extended bits of prose outline the paint contractors, the Western Electric Sound System, and new acoustic corrective sold by The Asbestos and Belting Company. Peppered along the periphery of the article are numerous photographs showing the updated hall and its new additions, including the modern projection room. A full-page advertisement urges the public to see "3 teams of Brilliant Stars in the Grandest of All Musical Romances!" Also present is promotional material for neon lights, soundproofing, and other materials which would only be of interest to business owners in Bombay (ibid.: 5-8). The article does not discuss the decision to retain the space's name.

This spread makes clear that the Royal Opera House is a site of modernity, even if the cultural contents displayed inside changed: opera was out while talking cinema was in. But what *kind* of modernity was it, Western or Indian? Rajnayaran Chandavarkar advocates for an understanding of Bombay as always already modern. This unique state of being occurs through the city's constant restructuring in response to social, economic, and geographic change (2009:15-16). Chandavarkar does not mention the Royal Opera House, but the space's history falls squarely within his theory. So when one considers the general scope of the *Times* supplement, it becomes clear that the newspaper's editorial team wanted the public to think of Bombay as a city keeping up with European culture, all while catering to the needs of citizens on the ground. The construction of the Royal Opera House in the early twentieth century was one way in which British expatriates attempted to achieve this cultural desire, and the renovation of the hall into a cinema was merely taking that drive one step further. The space was a site of European opulence and musical class within the hustle and bustle of Bombay itself, while the designation "opera house" marked the terrain as one of a distinctly European version of modernity even as the contents shifted away from *prima donnas* to film stars.

### **...and Now**

The Royal Opera House continued to function as a single-screen cinema for the next fifty years. By the 1970s and 80s, however, the multiplex had come into vogue and the hall faded from daily life, closing its doors for good in 1993. Conservation efforts sprung up in the mid-2000s when a group of architects in Mumbai submitted a preservation plan to the city's Urban Heritage Conservation Committee. Restoration began in 2008; the process was slow, but after the World Monuments Fund placed the hall on their list of endangered architectural sites, the pace picked up dramatically (Nair 2011). In 2016, builders completed interior renovations and the Royal Opera House Mumbai (as it is now

known) opened its doors for the first time in twenty-three years. In 2017, UNESCO honored the hall with a Cultural Heritage Conservation award (Kotak 2017).

The opera house's website proudly proclaims "We are a performance space and cultural venue par excellence. Widely touted as the city's Cultural Crown Jewel and India's only surviving Opera House, we are one of the last standing Baroque structures in Mumbai today" (Royal Opera House n.d.). This blatant colonial rhetoric would be telling on its own, but becomes more startling when coupled with the coverage of the restoration in news outlets across India. Pankti Kadakia of the *Hindustan Times* downplays the Royal Opera House's history in cinema, only mentioning how the space was converted in the 1970s to make it appropriate for art-deco cinema (2016). Mohua Dasi of the *Times of India* got closer to the factual history of the hall through a discussion of the space's cinematic past, though even this article stresses the need for a space for live performances in the heart of Mumbai, stating that since the Royal Opera House was converted into a cinema, there were no other appropriate places for theatre and Western music (2015). (I should note that the National Centre for the Performing Arts opened in Bombay in 1986, and contains five theaters capable of hosting Western music performances.) The most egregious error comes from NDTV; in a television spot on the renovation, the station contended that the first performance in the reconstructed hall was a concert by Bombay-born British soprano Patricia Rozario. NDTV failed to mention that the day before her concert of Western operatic arias the Royal Opera House hosted the Mumbai Academy of Moving Images Film Festival (2016).

I do not intend to suggest a level of malice or an intentional revisionist history on the part of these news organizations. It is quite telling, however, that throughout the history of the Royal Opera House, journalists attempted to raise the cultural value of the space through association with Western opera, all while arguing that the venue was open to all. Within twenty years of the site's construction, opera was not drawing crowds, but opera-as-concept remained via the space's name, connecting the hall to Western ideals of class. As others continually updated the space to meet the needs of modern performing ensembles and movie screenings, retaining the name "Royal Opera House" kept the hall in a static cultural state at the height of the Raj, where Western opulence and grandeur were essential for the city's European elite.

In a sense, there are competing modernities at the Royal Opera House Mumbai. On one hand, there is a version where a seemingly-lost form of Western modernity, still

celebrated throughout Europe as a symbol of class and intellect, is touted as having a historic home in India and needs to be supported. On the other hand, there is a uniquely Indian form of modernity present in film and cinema culture, a practice with a distinctive claim to the space. And yet, in almost all publicity material, administrators and journalists highlight opera and other forms of Western art music. In 2017, Asad Lallijee, Senior VP and CEO of Avid Learning (the curatorial group charged with running the Royal Opera House), described opera as a small but fervent “niche market” in India. Furthermore, site administrators made known that one of their primary goals was to promote opera, all while democratizing the genre and growing its market (BloombergQuint 2017). It is almost as if some perceive Western music as a global standard for “high art music,” even in light of the numerous classical traditions native to India. In an era of increasing globalization, the promotion of a universal standard takes on new meaning, one in which unity through diversity is not acceptable, but instead shared experiences and benchmarks are key. In this case, the advancement of Western opera in India becomes another way of bringing the nation to the West in an almost neocolonial fashion. For some in India today, it is not so much about the actual performance of opera as it is the *idea* that opera *could* be performed in the house.

Opera as performed and, even more importantly, conceptualized asserted much weight among British expatriates during the 350 years of British occupation in India; the genre continues to loom high in the minds of certain Indians to this day. Even after the genre lost its appeal as a marker of modernity to the expatriate elite, the Royal Opera House, a space designed explicitly for its performance, retained its status as a place of “high culture.” Through British colonial rule in India, opera and its clout became ingrained within a site in the center of urban India, even as the opera house’s ability to meet the needs of the city’s community points toward a unique form of South Asian modernity.

The role of Western art music outside of Europe and its impact on modern culture deserves more attention from musicologists, ethnomusicologists, and scholars of postcolonialism. A more in-depth consideration of opera in India and other colonial spaces would play a significant role in understanding the imperial experience from a multitude of angles, as well as inform the growing corpus of literature on global music history. This article barely scratches the surface of the story of opera in Mumbai. There is room for a more systematic reconstruction of programming decisions, as well as close readings of specific operas and their reception within the city. Opera, in its absence and presence, as performed and conceptualized, exerted an enormous influence on the life of Anglo-Indians on the subcontinent, and this influence persists to this day.



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Many thanks to the numerous colleagues, mentors, and friends who helped with this article in its many forms: Gabrielle Cornish, Anaar Desai-Stephens, Lisa Jakelski, Mary McArthur, and Jane Sylvester. This project benefitted immensely from feedback received from colleagues in Anaar's Approaches to South Asian Music Seminar and the 2018 SEM Niagara Meeting. Additionally, I am thankful for the many useful comments from the anonymous readers from the journal.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Among Europeans living in India, terms for national identity were quite fungible until well into the twentieth century. For example, it was not uncommon for British service members in the eighteenth century to call themselves "Indian." (See Colley 2002.) Throughout this article, I use the term "British expatriate" to refer to individuals of British heritage living in India. Here I follow the terminology put forward by Bradley Shupe (2016).

<sup>2</sup> In this article, I refer to cities by their names during the period in question. Furthermore, as many of the *Times of India* articles cited do not have titles or have generic labels, I will provide dates and page numbers in citations.

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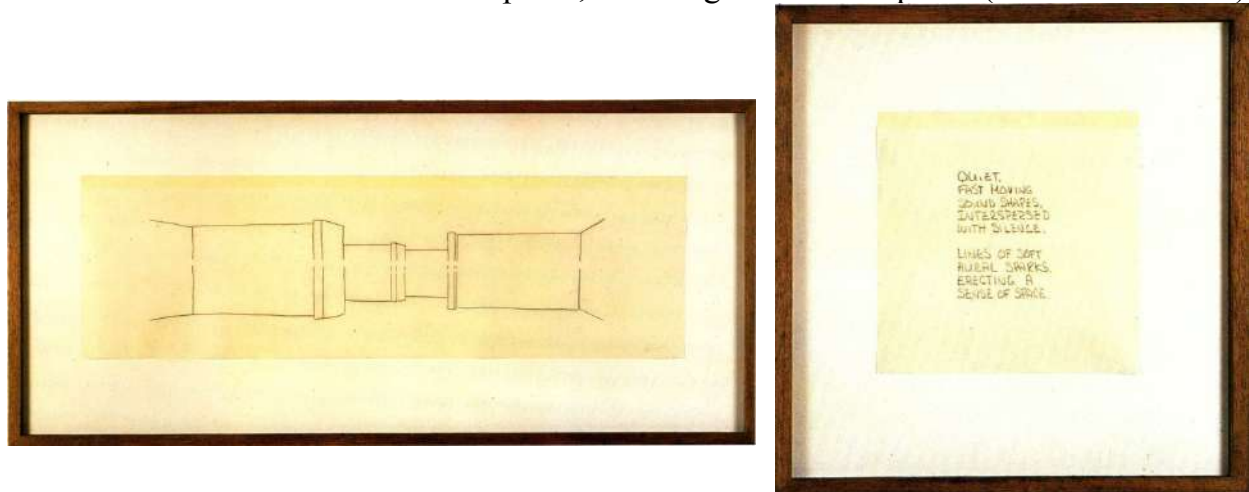
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## **Delineations of the Invisible: Notes on Max Neuhaus' Drawing Practice<sup>1</sup>**

**Matthieu Saladin**

Straight lines are arranged on a page in landscape format, marking themselves out from each other at their junction point: vertical and horizontal lines, some obliques. They're organized according to a perspective that, while approximate, is sufficient for the spatial illusion of a series of open rooms to operate. Because of this approximation however, we can also see the industrial drawing of a cylindrically shaped spare part from an unknown mechanism, a cog in an apparatus. The pencil line is slightly febrile, showing execution by hand, not with a ruler, in spite of the technical aspect of the work overall. Each vertical line is segmented a little above its center by one or, for some, two blank spaces, perhaps erased after the line was drawn, the emptiness tracing just so many horizontal lines that run, invisible, across the entire width of the page. Arranged to the right of the drawing, a second frame, square this time, contains a page on which a few handwritten lines have been inscribed in capital letters, like a poem: "Quiet / fast moving / sound shapes, / interspersed / with silence. / Lines of soft / aural sparks, / erecting a / sense of space" (Neuhaus 1995:59).



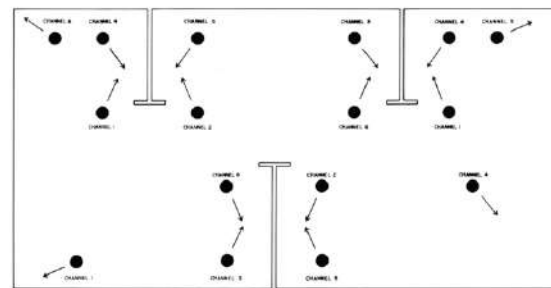
**Figure 1. Neuhaus, *Bell Gallery* diptych. Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.**

This diptych produced by Max Neuhaus in 1993 refers back to a sound installation presented by the artist at the David Winton Bell Gallery in 1983 (Figure 1).<sup>2</sup> According to the precept that guides his work, the starting point for this installation is to be found in the space itself: "the sound which already exists there, the nature of its acoustic and its social context" (Neuhaus 1989:236). The installation here consisted of a set of sixteen speakers connected to a computer system and placed around the exhibition space, invisible to the eye, disguised as electrical equipment around the edge of the ceiling. Each loudspeaker was located in reference to an angle of the room so as to emit an intermittent electronic pulse, a dry clicking sound,<sup>3</sup> towards the angle to give the impression that the sound was

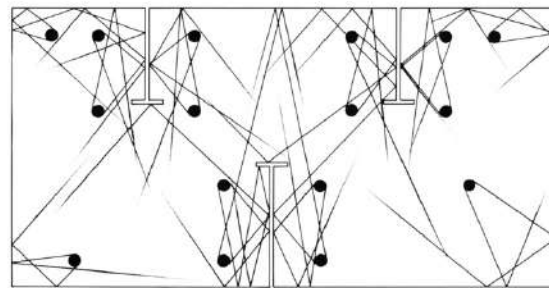
coming from the “corners themselves, with their complex patterns of reflection and acoustic shadows” (ibid.). This series of clicks produced an effect of movement, like a phrasing circulating in space. Writing about the work, Neuhaus stated: “When people spoke, it couldn't be heard; but when people were silent, the ear could see this something crossing the room. It constructed its space by articulating it. It exhibited it by moving through it” (1995:115).

This drawing is not the only imagery documenting this installation. Other drawings, prior to the diptych and this time resolutely technical, show, for example, the plan of the locations and orientations of the loudspeakers, establish an analysis of the reflections produced by each sound projection or provide a breakdown of the sequencing (the turning on and off) of the different sources to highlight the illusion of the perceived journey (these drawings are notably published in Neuhaus [1989:237, 245]). These other drawings indicate directions, trace vectors, and, by adopting a two-dimensional representation, portray propagations in a space consisting here of the acoustic relationships between a sound emission and a site (Figure 2).

The sound sources were invisible and complex. Sixteen speakers, placed near the ceiling and disguised as light fixtures, were pointed at the sixteen corners of the space. This caused the corners themselves, with their complex patterns of reflection and acoustic shadows, to become apparent sources of sound. The speakers were combined into six sound channels. These channels were made up of two or three speakers in different locations. Each channel formed a sound source shape within the room.



SOUND SOURCE DISTRIBUTION



SOUND PROJECTION AND REFLECTIONS

NEUHAUS SOUND INSTALLATION  
BELL GALLERY  
LESLIE ART CENTER  
BROWN UNIVERSITY  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND  
FEBRUARY - MARCH, 1983  
DRAWING 1

**Figure 2. Neuhaus' plan for *Bell Gallery*. Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.**

Whether of a technical or allusive nature, the drawings that Neuhaus creates for each installation all attest, according to their own modalities, to a situation functioning as an apparatus - both constituted by the installation itself and that defined by the site housing it and the relationships the installation establishes there. In doing so, they probe the experience created: “The listener entering the Bell Gallery was confronted with *an empty*

*space* – he began to find his place when he noticed the sound” (Neuhaus 1989:244, my emphasis).

### **Typology of drawings**

Before detailing the reports of the apparatuses inscribed in these drawings and how they give us a broader idea of what is going on in the artist's sound installations, it is worth briefly considering their status in Max Neuhaus' body of work. As we have seen, these drawings fall into different categories, explicitly inventoried as such by the artist. A first set consists of the project drawings, produced while the work was still in the design phase and therefore prior to the installation itself. These are studies created for sponsors and institutions issuing authorizations and budgets necessary for the production of works that were often large in scale and/or that occupied public spaces. The work to be created being fundamentally *in situ* and sound being only the means and not the end, Max Neuhaus refused to present his projects by means of sound samples, favoring rather a medium conducive to a problematization that would not misrepresent them: “Rather than the vehicle for reducing a three dimensional reality to two, the drawing here can become a means of stating an idea in an open medium, without the fixative of verbal language, a medium outside that of the sound work which does not impinge on it” (Neuhaus 1994b:9).

A second category brings together the technical drawings often undertaken after the installation had been set up, like those mentioned above for the installation at the Bell Gallery. These are working drawings, aimed at illustrating the acoustic properties of a space on paper; they map the phenomena that are deployed in the space. They constitute a sort of explanation for Neuhaus himself, helping to clarify the functioning of complex psychoacoustic relationships, such as the network of reflections generated by the multiplicity of the sound sources mobilized and their effects on perception: “A few weeks after finishing a work, I execute a few drawings to explain what I have produced to myself” (Neuhaus 1992:150).<sup>4</sup> In his interviews, lectures and writings on his drawings, Neuhaus repeatedly insists that these first two categories are radically different from the work, in the sense that “they are not part of the process of perceiving a sound work; they are reflections upon it” (Neuhaus 1994b:11).

A final category corresponds to that of the diptychs, produced as of the early 1990s, initially for his place-works, namely almost 25 years after the first installations in relation to which they were devised. Although, as Patrick Javault points out, the fact that the drawings were produced such a long time later was undoubtedly motivated by an attempt to “standardize his activity to some extent, as [the drawings] by Christo or Dan Graham [had been able to do] before him” (2018: 51),<sup>5</sup> and, thus, to meet the demands of the art market, Neuhaus himself stated that this relatively long period was due to the time it took “to figure out how to do them without compromising the sound work” (Neuhaus 2003) at the same time as producing a form that constituted both *an imprint* and *a prologue*. Unlike the two previous

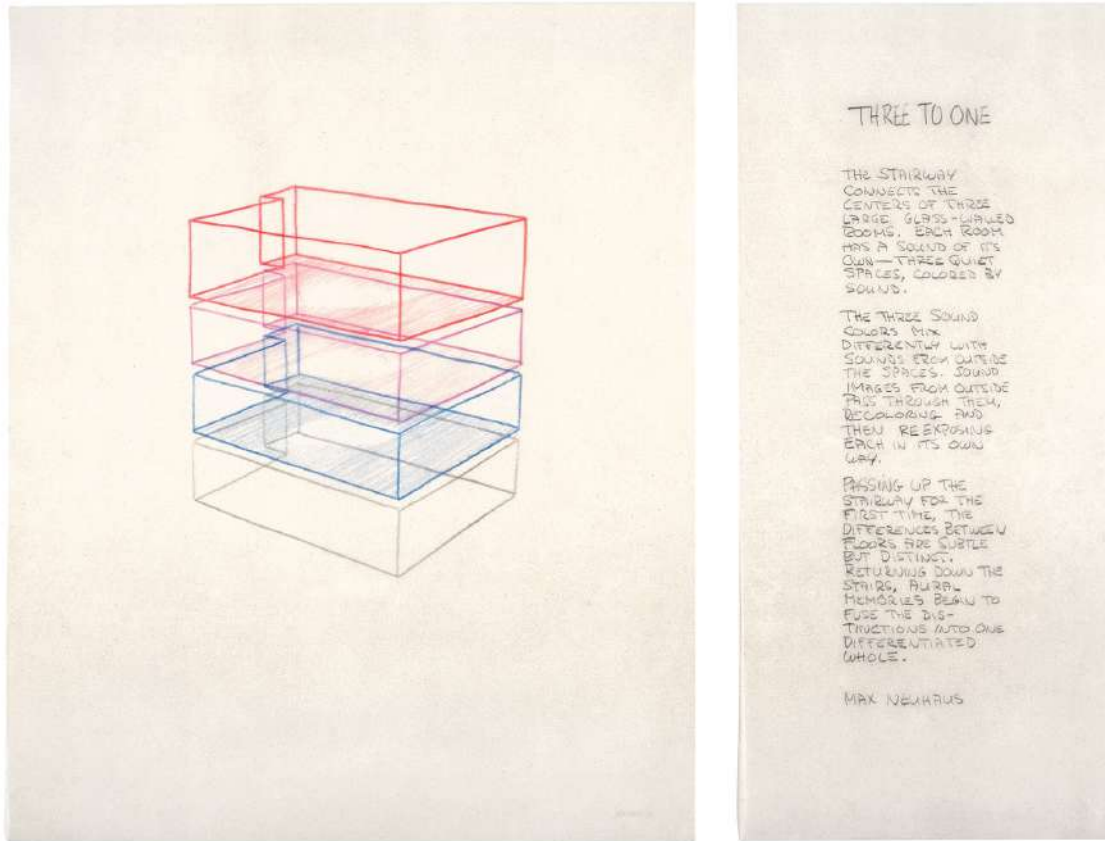
categories, the diptychs do have a close relationship with the work associated with them. On one hand they are presented in the form of imprints in the sense that some refer to works that no longer exist, but, on the other hand, the artist alternately uses the terms “preamble,” “preface,” or “introduction” to the installations in reference to them, even though these drawings were systematically executed after the installations. Through them he in fact aimed to provide an approach to the work in the paradoxical form of *feedback* that would serve rather as an introduction and that alone would be capable of “pushing presumptions aside to some extent and generating new expectations in order to return . . . the spectator to their initial starting point” (Neuhaus 1992:235),<sup>6</sup> as happens with a loop. As summarized by Ulrich Loock, while the installations belong to a first level, that of *the experience*, the drawings can be seen as *feedback on the experience* (Neuhaus 1990:132). Each diptych thus includes “two drawings, one visual and one verbal – a drawn image and a handwritten text hung side by side” (Neuhaus 1994b:10). The text-image association is fundamental here in that it involves two mediums foreign to the installation medium, but also, in the first place, through the incessant toing and froing from one to the other that it triggers, recreating between them, to a certain extent, the same relationship that the diptych itself maintains with its reference installation:

The image and the text that I write are framed in separate frames. Neither is complete. What I mean to say is they can’t stand alone, they only function together, they function very deliberately together. If you start to look at the drawing, there’s too much missing which means you turn to the text. And when you start reading the text you come to a point where there’s also something missing, so you start to turn to the drawing. (Neuhaus 2003)

### **Evocation versus representation**

The reciprocal incompleteness of the image and the text allows Max Neuhaus to avoid the risk of representation, calling instead on *evocation*. In reference to his first exhibition of drawings, presented at Villa Arson (Nice, France) in 1995, he explained that the title chosen, *Evoking the aural*,<sup>7</sup> was a very exact definition of his approach to drawing in the sense that this medium was about “establishing the form of the idea without placing limits on it” (Neuhaus 2003). Despite their proximity to the works, the diptychs should not be confused with them. They are not a reproduction or a description or even an adaptation of the installations by means of other techniques but are a way of “forming catalysts for individual trains of thought” (Neuhaus 1994a:5). This specificity, sometimes ambiguously formulated in the artist's writings, may have led to misunderstandings about their status. Thus, Greg Desjardins, in spite of being a connoisseur of Neuhaus’ work, is inclined to see “a pictorial presence of the work, a kind of representation” in them. The artist refuted this during his public discussion with Desjardins in 2003 at the symposium ‘Écrire, décrire le son’ at the Domaine de Kerguéhennec in France, conceding that the images “representing the site may be” (Neuhaus 2003), but in no case were the diptychs a representation as a work overall.





**Figure 3. Neuhaus, *Three to One* diptych. Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.**

This critique of the diptychs as representations is also there in the refusal to associate colors with pitches or qualities, Neuhaus clearly distancing himself from synesthetically motivated approaches (Neuhaus 2000). While colors are used in some of the diptychs, they only serve to signify different spaces, such as in the drawing of *Three to one* (Figure 3), the installation created in the AOK Building in Kassel for documenta IX: “I took these three colours to represent the sounds and made drawings that showed what happened, how they spread between [the floors]. But the colour never relates literally to the sound” (Neuhaus 2003). Thus the solution he adopted to nevertheless provide an introduction to the experience offered by his installations consisted quite simply in not seeking to represent their sound component graphically. Sound itself is not drawn, but rather “appears in the drawing as an un-drawn space” (Neuhaus 2003), like in the drawing in the Bell Gallery, but also the diptychs of the works *Times square* (1977-1992; 2002-; figure 4a), *Sound line* (1988; figure 4b) or that created for the lake at Kerguéhennec (1986-1988; figure 4c) (Figure 4). While sound is invisible, at least when it is perceived in its usual medium of propagation (the air), Neuhaus’ “construction of places” through his sound installations in fact creates *invisible spaces*, as evidenced by the poem for the *Sound Line* diptych.<sup>8</sup>

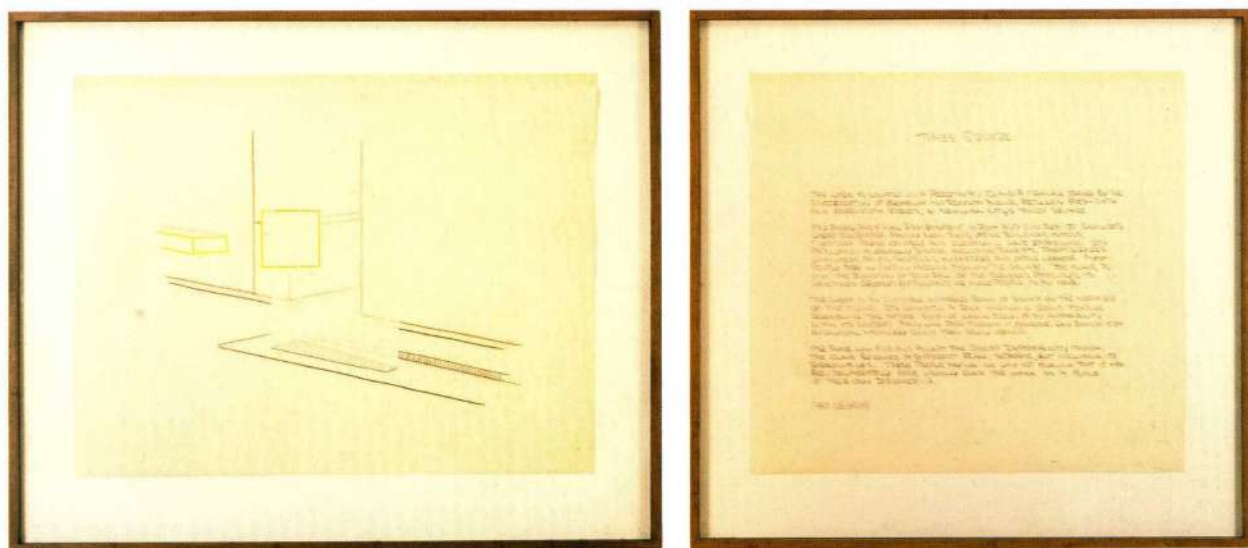


Figure 4a. Neuhaus, *Times Square* diptych. Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.

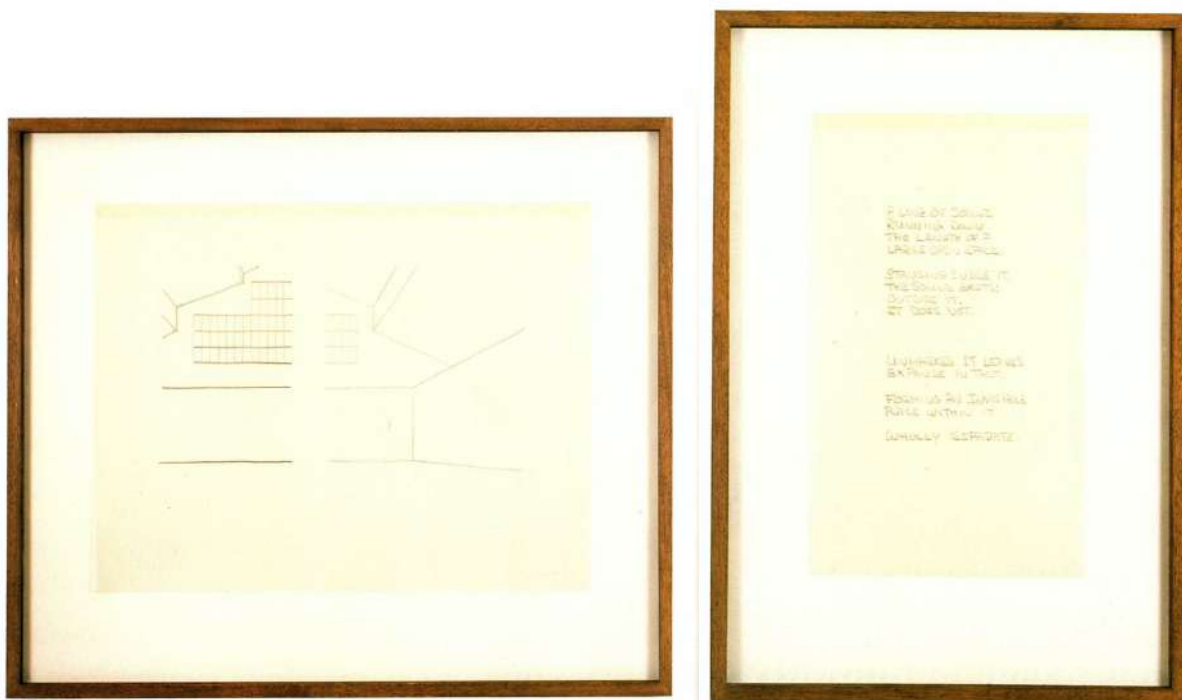


Figure 4b. Neuhaus, *Sound Line* diptych. Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.

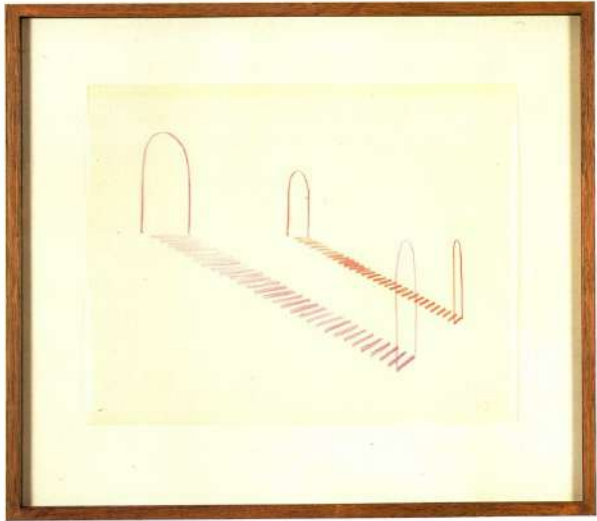


**Figure 4c. Neuhaus, untitled diptych (created for the lake at Kerguéhennec). Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.**



This non-representation through emptiness was not, however, sufficient for Max Neuhaus, confining the invisible within a register of visibility, even if only through negation, as aesthetically his works go beyond the separation of the senses, a concept that is always problematic by the way. Invisibility requires recourse to a dual medium in order to better disappear. As he told Greg Desjardins, “the problem of drawing something invisible makes this tradition somewhat hard to apply. So I decided to add the written word” (Neuhaus 2003). He went into further detail later in their conversation: “In fact, I rarely draw the sound. I usually leave that to the text part of the drawing. . . . Often the text and the image work so well that you don’t notice the space is not drawn. It leaves space for your imagination” (Neuhaus 2003). Moreover, it is also noticeable that the emptiness of the drawings does not only concern the sound part of the works. Objects, furniture, and even certain architectural elements of the sites are excluded from the drawings, revealing strangely decontextualized spaces, such as the two floating staircases in the diptych

produced for the work produced at the CAPC, the Bordeaux museum of contemporary art (Figure 5). It is however above all the individuals themselves, those who frequent these sites, confer a social life on them and who are at the heart of the subject matter the works concern themselves with that prove to be the great absence in these drawings, although we may suppose that such an absence is deliberately arranged so as to leave room for the imaginative presence of those who look at them. With regard to Eugène Atget's photographs inventorying the streets of Paris, and from which all human presence seems to have disappeared, Walter Benjamin noted: "Not for nothing have Atget's shots been compared with those of a crime scene. But is not every spot of our cities a crime scene? Every passer-by a perpetrator? Should not every photographer – descendant of the augurs and the haruspices – expose guilt on his pictures and identify the guilty?" (Benjamin 2015:93). Does the fact that Neuhaus gives emptiness such an important place in his diptychs make him a draughtsman of crime scenes? And if so, what crime?



**Figure 5. Neuhaus, untitled diptych, Bordeaux.**  
Courtesy estate Max Neuhaus.

### **Delineating the apparatuses**

The choice of drawing therefore appears to be strategic, opening up a field of possibilities that, according to Max Neuhaus, were prohibited to the other mediums usually used to capture or document a *site-specific* work. Recording would, for example, result in the loss of a "sense of space" (Neuhaus 1992:152). Similarly, a photograph could not "evoke" the singular experience of these "constructions of places", namely the perceptual renewal of a space produced by means of the inaudible and the invisible. From this point of view, the artist wrote: "the photograph is useless in describing them; in fact it is a distortion as it overemphasizes the absence of a visual component" (Neuhaus 1994b:10). Conversely,

recourse to drawing helped us to grasp this invisible part in itself, to determine the imperceptible presence of these works that call for contextual attention to be redeployed. In a text devoted to Max Neuhaus' drawings, Yehuda Safran wrote: "We draw to circumscribe that which is invisible, that which we cannot circumscribe – where there is nothing" (1994:8). And in fact, in Neuhaus' practice, drawing is used as the only medium able to provide what he calls "indicators and tracings of these invisible sound works," (Neuhaus 1994a:5) or in other words delineations.

In geometry, delineation is none other than the art of displaying contours, of marking boundaries with a single line. It is "the action of tracing out something by lines; the drawing of a diagram, geometrical figure, etc." (Oxford English Dictionary). Whatever category these drawings belong to, they are similar to map-like forms: technical diagrams of equipment, maps showing the placement of loudspeakers or other sources, architectural cut-outs, drawings of spatial organization, frequency register diagrams, or topographies of sound propagations.

It remains for us to answer the question previously raised, that of the "crime" that these lines draw a map of and, through this crime, to try to define what this invisible criminal element connects to, the sound of which is simply revelatory of it. During the aforementioned Kerguéhennec symposium, a member of the public asked Max Neuhaus a question, which may give a clue: "You erase the drawing in the place where the sound is to be found. Do you do this to evoke the spectator's experience or is it to show the effect of the sound on the space, a kind of breaking down of the space by means of sound?" (Neuhaus 2003).<sup>9</sup> The artist did not really answer this question, or rather did so by avoiding it by means of a digression on the relationship between text and image within the diptychs. By following the intuition of this anonymous attendee, we could argue that the empty spaces and lines of the drawings refer to both the spectator's experience and the transformation of the space at the same time, but only if we understand them in terms of their relationship to the other lines which connect them and give them their negative presence, in other words in terms of the apparatus to which they belong.

The emptiness is inseparable from the lines that surround it, just as the installations are from the social and acoustic spaces in which they are created.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Previously published in French in *Roven*, n°15, May 2020: 34–39.

<sup>2</sup> *Sound Installation*, David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, from February 11 to March 10, 1983.

<sup>3</sup> Neuhaus spoke of these sounds as "like finger snapping". (Neuhaus 1989: 242)

<sup>4</sup> Our translation of "Quelques semaines après avoir terminé une œuvre, je commence à exécuter quelques dessins pour m'expliquer à moi-même ce que j'ai produit."

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<sup>5</sup> Our translation of “de normaliser un peu son activité, comme avant lui [avaient pu le faire les dessins] de Christo ou de Dan Graham.”

<sup>6</sup> Our translation of “de balayer un peu les préjugés et d’engendrer de nouvelles attentes pour ramener [...] le spectateur à son propre point de départ.”

<sup>7</sup> Evoking the Aural/Évoquer l'auditif, Galeries du musée, Villa Arson, Nice, from July 8 to October 1, 1995.

<sup>8</sup> “A Line of sound / running down / the length of a / large open space. / Standing inside it, / the sound exists; / outside it, / it does not. / Unmarked it leaves / expanse in tact. / Forming an invisible place within it / wholly separate.” (Neuhaus 1995:73)

<sup>9</sup> Our translation of “Vous effacez le dessin à l’endroit où se trouve le son. Est-ce pour évoquer l’expérience du spectateur ou est-ce pour montrer l’effet du son sur l’espace, comme une sorte de désintégration de l’espace par le son ?”

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## **NEVA AGAIN: Hip Hop Art, Activism and Education in Post-Apartheid South Africa**

**Quentin Williams, Adam Haupt, H. Samy Alim and Emile Jansen**

This book is the culmination of decades of work on Hip Hop culture and Hip Hop activism in South Africa. It speaks to the emergence and development of a unique style of Hip Hop on the Cape Flats – the outlying township areas located within a 25-kilometre range of the city of Cape Town and housing largely working-class black<sup>1</sup> and coloured residents – and, in the case of one chapter, in the Eastern Cape. A distinctive feature of this book is that it weaves together the many varied and rich voices of this dynamic Hip Hop scene to present a powerful vision for the potential of youth art, culture, music, language and identities to shape our politics. These voices have never been read together before, often featured separately in newspapers, opinion pieces and academic essays.

As a challenge to the constraining, colonial nature of academic research and writing, this volume presents academic analyses side by side with, and sometimes privileging, the brilliant insights from the creative minds behind this transformative cultural movement. Throughout the book, we share original artist interviews, panel discussions, and essays written by both the pioneers of Hip Hop in South Africa and the next generation of Hip Hop heads who are active in the culture today. Within these pages, and given the multi-genre, polyvocal nature of this text, we are particularly concerned with understanding how activism comes to shape and define Hip Hop culture in post-apartheid South Africa. Some of the questions we asked as we launched this project were:

- » What is the history of Hip Hop activism in South Africa?
- » What are some of the strategies that Hip Hop heads employ to sustain their art and activism?
- » How do Hip Hop artists rethink the relationship between language, education and power? And how do they transform those relations through their sociolinguistic and educational engagements?
- » What are the race, class, gender and sexuality politics of South African Hip Hop? And how do Hip Hop heads deal with the intersectional and transformational politics of the present?



Hip Hop activism can be understood as a form of activism that employs Hip Hop to engage communities critically and creatively with regard to their respective social, economic and political contexts, either through live performance and artistic production (e.g. graffiti, poetry, lyricism, turntablism or breaking) or through educational practices within and beyond conventional schooling (e.g. conducting workshops or developing curricula for alternative forms of education). In a recent work, we contend that ‘hip hop has become a meaningful way for diverse sets of artists, activists and a range of other types of hip hop participants to seize agency in the ways in which they are represented and to make sense of their respective contexts’ (Haupt, Williams & Alim 2018:13). It is a form of practice that challenges the oppression and homogenisation of individuals, groups and communities. It embraces the concept Each One, Teach One – a motto that was taken to heart by young activists during the struggle against apartheid, particularly during the apartheid state’s repression of freedom of movement during the states of emergency. During that historical moment, youth themselves took responsibility for their education in modes of engagement that dispensed with the traditional teacher–pupil hierarchy that was associated with regressive, apartheid-era education. It was during this time that some young activists first realised that ‘conscious’ Hip Hop could be used as a vehicle for them to express their political beliefs. At the same time, young people who were not necessarily politically engaged came to be politically active via the music as well as through their interactions with more politically aware Hip Hop heads, in meeting places such as The Base, which used to run Saturday Hip Hop matinees during the final years of legislated apartheid. The focus was on how to raise the critical consciousness of the Hip Hop community and facilitate ways for artists to exercise agency in the face of social, economic and political restrictions. For South African heads, Hip Hop activism involved translating the culture locally, but also teaching aspects of Black Consciousness, the principles of the Nation of Islam and the fundamentals of the Zulu Nation, among other influential ideologies.

In many respects, this book speaks to how Hip Hop artists, activists and educators have built upon the work of earlier heads to make sense of life in post-apartheid South Africa, a context that continues to struggle with racialised and gendered class inequalities as well as with various forms of interpersonal prejudice – be it gendered, racialised or class-based.



**Figure 1. GRANDMASTER DJ READY D. Source: Ference Isaacs.**

### NEVA AGAIN

The book takes its title from Prophets of da City's (POC's) song 'Neva Again', which was a single on *Phunk Phlow* (1995), the album released after their third album, *Age of Truth*, was banned in 1993. The song references the first democratically elected president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, in his 1994 inaugural speech, by sampling the most famous portion of this speech at the outset of the track. The music video opens with grainy footage of the crew walking the city and then moves into a small lounge where they are watching TV. The camera pans from the TV set to the crew as they watch Mandela intently while he delivers the lines: 'Never, never and never again shall it be that this beautiful land will again experience the oppression of one by another.'<sup>2</sup>

Unlike tracks from *Age of Truth*, 'Neva Again' was aired repeatedly on SABC TV (at the time, the South African Broadcasting Corporation acted as a mouthpiece for the apartheid regime, but made the transition to being a public service broadcaster with the advent of democracy), no doubt in celebration of the nation's first democratic elections and the victory of the African National Congress (ANC). Shaheen Ariefdien's opening lines in the song suggest that what is at stake is leadership that truly represents the interests of citizens:

Excellent!

Finally a black president!

To represent

The notions of representation and authenticity are key themes in Hip Hop; artists are expected to authentically represent their experiences and the communities from which they come. Often, the kind of authenticity that is celebrated is linked to representations of working-class black neighbourhoods, or ‘the hood’ (Jeffries 2011). Ariefdien celebrates the authenticity of the president because he represents the interests of black citizens after a hard-fought struggle by youth to both free Nelson Mandela from imprisonment and to secure a democratic state that will serve the interests of civil society – in other words, leadership that is representative. In Hip Hop terms, the president *represents*. In this regard, DJ Ready D raps that the process of securing and maintaining the gains of the struggle is one that requires constant vigilance and continual revision:

Books and pens are great, Now knowledge awaits Seeka the believer and  
the believer will become the achiever and the achiever needs to pass it on,  
knowledge of self is gonna make us strong You made a choice you took the  
vote Madiba spoke and said ‘NEVER AGAIN’ yes yes sure, we should  
help the man to make sure that the future stays secure or...REVOLUTION

Ready D’s reference to books and pens alludes to the return to school after years of school protests, boycotts, the detention of youth and skirmishes with riot police and intelligence operatives, as well as to the concept of Knowledge of Self – education is essential to pursuing freedom.

What is worth noting here is that, despite the celebratory nature of this song, Ready D’s verse – which precedes the outgoing chorus’s reference to R&B/funk/disco band Skyy’s celebratory song ‘Here’s to You’ – contains not-so-thinly veiled undertones of the defiance that characterised *Age of Truth*, which was unyielding in its refusal to accept both the ANC’s and the National Party’s calls to ‘forgive and forget’ in the build-up to the elections (Haupt 1996, 2001). While Ready D raps that citizens should assist the president in securing the nation’s future, he invokes the threat of revolution. This aligns with *Age of Truth*’s call for revolution as a means of rejecting calls for reconciliation that are not accompanied with a clear plan for distributive and restorative justice in post-

apartheid South Africa. When the elections produced a victory for Nelson Mandela and the ANC, they celebrated this victory but also indicated that if the ruling party were to falter, they would not hesitate to engage them critically. The invocation of revolution in the event that citizens do not play an active part in democratic processes could thus be read as a healthy measure of scepticism on their part.

The scepticism in this song as well as on *Age of Truth* was justified, in retrospect. Mandela's statement that 'this beautiful land should [never] again experience oppression of one by another' is ironic in light of the fact that the ruling party proceeded to embrace neoliberal economic policies. These policies have done very little to reverse the racialised class inequalities that legislated apartheid, produced largely because they place a low premium on public spending and adopt a laissez-faire approach to state regulation of markets (Haupt 2008, 2012). In fact, Africa Check reports that white South Africans are least affected by poverty by a very large margin, while a very large percentage of black and coloured South Africans live in poverty (Table 1).

POPULATION GROUP	NO.	%
AFRICAN/BLACK	28 267 530	64.2
COLOURED	1 989 304	41.3
INDIAN/ASIAN	79 460	5.9
WHITE	47 494	1.0
SOUTH AFRICA	30 383 788	55.5

Source: Wilkinson (2018)

**Table 1. Numer of people living in poverty in South Africa by Population Group.**

These statistics challenge the claims made by white right-wing interest groups, such as Solidarity, that white South Africans are living in poverty and that they are being marginalised by a black-led government. They also challenge claims by coloured nationalist interest groups, such as Gatvol Capetonians, that African/black South Africans are being afforded more opportunities than coloured South Africans and that coloured communities are therefore being marginalised.

It is ironic that Africa Check uses apartheid-era racial classifications to demonstrate that inequalities that were produced by apartheid continue to operate along the same racialised lines well after apartheid. For this reason, those apartheid racial categories are useful as

indicators of the progress South Africa has made since the fall of legislated apartheid. However, we contend that we should always be wary of using these racial categories without thoughtful consideration of the ways in which race continues to be culturally, politically, socially, legally and economically constructed. It is also ironic that white and coloured nationalist interest groups employ the same categories used to reinforce the apartheid state's logic of racial segregation to assert that they are being marginalised, while the empirical data clearly undermine their claims. Citizens in the African/black category make up 64.2 per cent of people living in poverty, coloured citizens make up 41.3 per cent, while Indian/Asian make up 5.9 per cent and white South Africans account for just 1 per cent. The figures for African/black citizens are dismal, while the figures for citizens in the coloured category are also cause for concern. While the disparity between coloured subjects and those in the African/black category is significant, it is also apparent that citizens who fall in both categories have a great deal more in common when it comes to class struggles – this has not changed since the decline of legislated apartheid. In effect, the commonalities along class lines make Steve Biko's (1978:48) definition of Black Consciousness compelling:

We have defined blacks as those who are by law or tradition politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in the South African society and identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle towards the realisation of their aspirations.

This definition illustrates to us a number of things:

- » Being black is not a matter of pigmentation – being black is a reflection of a mental attitude.
- » Merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road towards emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being.

Biko rejected biologically essentialist conceptions of race; instead, he recognised that race serves political and economic functions in a capitalist economy and that it is shaped by these factors. The assertion of blackness is therefore a political one that rejects the internalisation of racist interpellation and dehumanisation, as theorised by Frantz Fanon in *Black Skins, White Masks* (1967). Biko therefore calls for solidarity between diverse

black communities in efforts to oppose racism and systemic processes of marginalisation. His work is thus essential in a context where racial divisions endure and where racialised class inequalities continue to shape the spaces that citizens occupy as well as relationships between communities that still view each other along apartheid-defined racial lines. Further, Biko contends that blackness reflects one's mental attitude and that one's emancipation comes from within. This resonates with Hip Hop's conception of Knowledge of Self – freedom and creativity come from critical introspection and self-affirmation before engaging any given context critically or creatively.

Returning to POC's sample of Mandela's historic speech, it is clearly ironic. Their album was banned for advancing a revolutionary message that rejected calls for reconciliation when they rapped lines such as 'Forgive and forget?/Naa! It's easier said than done 'cause you stole the land from the black man'. The issue of the land and restorative and distributive justice, along with critical reflections on state violence and repression, are key themes that run throughout the album – and this book. These themes prefigure current debates about gentrification, land reclamation, the assassination of social movement activists, political activists' so-called 'land invasions', state repression of protests in places like Marikana, various township service delivery protests and university protests, the latter having been the site of movements like Fees Must Fall in recent years. A quarter of a century after making it, Mandela's statement, 'Never again', serves to highlight these failures of the state. The oppression of one by another is being experienced again. It is happening again in service of white global capital privilege at the hands of the black elite, 'whose mission has nothing to do with transforming the nation; it consists, prosaically of being the transmission line between the nation and a capitalism, rampant though camouflaged' (Fanon 1968:122).

Despite these challenges, Hip Hop artists and activists are exercising their creative and political agency on stage, in the studio, on social media, in workshops, classrooms, panel discussions and in any other available learning space, much like they did in the late 1980s and early 1990s. As we witness throughout the pages of this book, Hip Hop plays a key role in assisting them to redefine themselves on their own terms as well as to renegotiate their relationship with spaces, institutions and hierarchies that position them in ways that potentially limit their agency. Perhaps it is in this regard that the appellation 'never again' rings true on an aspirational level. Thanks to transgressive countercultures such as Hip Hop, black subjects (in the inclusive Biko sense of the term) should never again be silenced by repressive practices.



## OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

This book includes photographic work by Ference Isaacs to present examples of the visual and performative modalities of Hip Hop. It also includes images supplied by Emile Jansen and Heal the Hood, given their intimate relationship with artists and activists over the years. In this regard, the book is also associated with music produced by a collective of Hip Hop and jazz musicians who call themselves #IntheKeyofB. The recording project began as a community event that was produced by former Brasse Vannie Kaap (BVK) b-boy, Bradley Lodewyk (aka King Voue), to lay claim to his neighbourhood, Bonteheuwel, as a creative space in the face of ongoing gang violence and negative press coverage that largely associated it exclusively with violent crime. The recording project led to the production of an extended play (EP), co-produced by Gary Erfort (aka Arsenic), Lodewyk and Adam Haupt, and explores themes such as gun violence, toxic masculinity, racialised poverty, racism, gentrification, government corruption, and language and identity politics. Many of these themes speak to aspects of the book and feature a range of MCs as well as instrumentalists who perform jazz and R&B. The project is unique because it brings Hip Hop artists both into the studio with and onto the same stage as instrumentalists and singers from other genres. Despite the key artistic differences in this collective, all artists have one thing in common: they are from the Cape Flats, a space that has hegemonically been represented in racially stereotypic ways. In many respects, this creative collaboration defies those stereotypes.



**Figure 2. POC ALL ELEMENTS JAM.**  
**Source: Ference Isaacs.**

The other parts of the book are introduced below.

### **PART ONE: bring that beat back: Sampling early narratives**

The chapters in Part One provide a decolonial perspective on our present times. Hip Hop is intricately bound up with the story of enslavement and colonisation and is profoundly political. It has been politicised from its inception and its precursors, the cultural practices that preceded Hip Hop, are signifyin(g), as Henry Louis Gates Jr theorises it in his books *The Signifying Monkey* (1988) and *Figures in Black* (1987). Signifying and playing the dozens. Verbal insults, verbal duelling, wordplay, the punchline – all of these things are not actually specifically Hip Hop cultural practices; they precede Hip Hop. They come from playing the dozens.

In this section, there is a strand of Hip Hop activism that is closely tied to the black nationalist narrative associated with places like the South Bronx, narratives that played an important role in uniting people across a range of boundaries in South Africa. Blackness became a unifying signifier that brought together people who were undermined, who were exploited and marginalised by colonialism. Black nationalism unified diverse groups under a broad, inclusive banner of blackness. Thus, if in Cape Town, for example, the apartheid state positioned people as either coloured or black (Zulu, Xhosa or Sotho), black nationalist narratives rejected what they viewed as ‘divide-and-conquer’ strategies by, as Public Enemy’s Chuck D famously rapped, ‘the powers that be’. For many Hip Hop heads at the time, even if they self-identified as coloured, they also recognised themselves as being part of the broader black experience – that is, colouredness was viewed within the spectrum of blackness, not separate from or superior to blackness.

In reading the chapters in Part One, it becomes evident how groups like Prophets of da City, Black Noise and Godessa were able to tap into the concept of Knowledge of Self as they developed their various Hip Hop artistic practices. The chapters not only inform the reader about the importance of Knowledge of Self, and Hip Hop art and activism, but they do so while exploring the role of the DJ, MC, dancer and graffiti writer. The aesthetics of Hip Hop are not separate from its politics. In fact, as Tricia Rose argues (ironically, in 1994), the aesthetic is political in Hip Hop because Hip Hop privileges black cultural priorities where whiteness insists on hearing only ‘black noise’.

The insightful interviews conducted by Adam Haupt with the pioneering artists of South African Hip Hop open up a range of conversations about life under apartheid, and the role Hip Hop played in the development of a distinctly local style that served to celebrate life



under, as well as resist, those oppressive conditions. Interviews with POC, and pioneering DJs Azuhl and Eazy, demonstrate that while often DJs are the most underrated standard-bearers of Hip Hop, they nevertheless push the culture to sample new ways of art(ing) and engaging in activism. From developing a new performance of ‘baby scratch’, ‘landing a toe’ and ‘nose on vinyl’, to new ways of sampling, the DJ is, as DJ Ready D explains, invested in the advancement of Knowledge of Self and focused on dispelling ignorance through performance. While the MC’s job is to advance Hip Hop through the word, what is clear from the interviews is that DJs are also known for their lyrical ingenuity and linguistic creativity. This interplay between the DJ and the MC – both functioning as ethnographers of Hip Hop culture, if you will – is produced through various artistic genres and modes that both archive and evolve particular politics and knowledges. A prime example of this kind of artistic work – this aesthetic activism of sorts – is Godessa’s pioneering music and lyricism. As an all-woman Hip Hop crew, they not only contested the sexual politics of Hip Hop, but also challenged sexism, racism and classism in the broader society.

Today, breakdancing is a dominant element of South African Hip Hop. This is in no small part due to the exhaustive efforts of Heal the Hood, and its pioneer Emile YX?. In a trailblazing chapter about the history and future of breakdancing as a Hip Hop element, Emile YX? demonstrates vividly that South African Hip Hop developed into a versatile culture during apartheid, producing new genres of breakdance pops, locks, top rocks, and contemporaneously krumping or jerking, while uniting diverse participants into inclusive dance circles, and conceiving of this circular arrangement as a metaphor for social inclusion. The future of Hip Hop culture in South Africa, as Emile YX? points out, will require the next generations to redouble their activism by putting thought into action.

The photographic work about Mak1One’s graffiti, compiled by Ference Isaacs (with assistance from Heal the Hood) and interspersed throughout the book, reintroduces the reader to the multimodality of graffiti, the one element of Hip Hop that through pictures has always conscientised the larger South African public. Graffiti artists provide a stylistic image comprising icons and figures, guiding the viewing public toward the stylistic repertoires and political messages of Hip Hop art and activism. And nowhere is this made clearer than in the ALKEMY interviews that Haupt conducted with Nazli Abrahams and Shaheen Ariefdien.

The graffiti artist is, like every participant in Hip Hop, self-critical and self-reflexive about the objects in their ‘throw-ups’ and ‘pieces’, focusing always on stylistic clarity but subtly (or explicitly) underwritten by challenging symbolic power. Graffiti artists are concerned with a Hip Hop ethnography of ocular aesthetics: how to conduct research from an empty canvas to producing a beautiful graffiti piece that stimulates our visual repertoires. And through this process, graffiti artists paint the diversity of our urban landscapes and provide the air to Hip Hop art and activism as a novelist would.

## **PART TWO: Awêh(ness): hip hop language activism and pedagogy**

In an interview with Marlon Burgess (Ariefdien & Burgess 2011:235), Shaheen Ariefdien said the following in relation to Hip Hop language style and politics:

[Cape Town] Hip Hop took the language of the ‘less thans’ and embraced it, paraded it, and made it sexy to the point that there is an open pride about what constituted ‘our’ style...to express local reworkings of hip-hop.

These words provide a cogent and concise definition of South Africa’s Hip Hop art, activism and education with respect to language. For decades, Hip Hop artists have honed, through individual effort and community gatherings, a South African style of Hip Hop based on ‘the language of the “less thans”’. This was an important phase in the localisation of the culture. Once the local scene found its voice, the artists who then became activists both interrogated and embraced the marginality of that voice, and they began to remix and amplify that voice.

But what happens when you really take on the plight of voiceless people, the language of the less thans, and make it form part of the principles and values of your art, activism and education? The chapters in this section, a rich collection of interviews, essays and panel discussions, dig into the linguistic, pedagogical and meaning-making systems of South African Hip Hop culture – not only in various distinctive styles but also reaching across cultural and racial borders to connect with other voiceless people. Contributors open up debates about supporting the culture’s multilingual speakers, South African Hip Hop rhyming for a global stage, and methods of developing the agency and voice of the marginalised via transformative language education and policies. Take for example the reflections on South African Hip Hop’s multilingual activism, that is, the process of establishing and identifying translingual means to produce new voices. The first few chapters demonstrate that various ways of speaking, used across a variety of languages, spaces and places, can be meaningful tools for empowering people of colour in

contemporary South Africa, and for counteracting the raciolinguistic profiling and discrimination faced by many of the nation's citizens in educational and other institutions.

As artists explain in these chapters, historically multilingual activism has always been a feature of South African Hip Hop. It has increased the mobility of Hip Hop artists, and allowed them to transcend borders and boundaries. Often, artists had to move across geographical locations to share in the inter-/cross-cultural voices and speech varieties of their neighbours and other communities. As Alim, Ibrahim and Pennycook (2009) argue in *Global Linguistic Flows: Hip Hop Cultures, Youth Identities, and the Politics of Language*, this kind of linguistic sharing, combined with Hip Hop's demand for linguistic innovation, creativity and a broader 'rule-breaking' ethos that eschews tradition, has made for some unique challenges to education and language policy-makers. Just as artists have and continue to 'remix multilingualism' (Williams 2017), educators will have to develop new, innovative pedagogies that allow communities to sustain these rich, globally influential language practices. Contributors in this part argue for a break from the eradicationist pedagogies of the past (those that erased our language varieties in the name of upward mobility) and a move towards the sustaining pedagogies of the future.

### **PART THREE: Remixing race and gender politics**

What happens when you speak out on racial and gender discrimination through Hip Hop art, activism and education? This question is answered by a number of sharp and critical intersectional reflections by some of South Africa's Hip Hop artists, activists and pedagogues. The chapters provide strategies on how to counter the hegemonic forces of racism, sexism and homophobia and how to challenge discrimination across society. Contributors demonstrate in detail how Knowledge of Self helps keep the oppressive politics of race, class and gender in check. However, as with all cultural practices, inward reflection on race and gender is sometimes overlooked, which is often the case when it comes to gender and sexuality in the male-dominated domains of Hip Hop. Within these pages, however, artists move beyond characterisations of Hip Hop culture as inherently sexist and misogynistic. Artists and activists have begun to take the intersections of race, gender and sexuality seriously and are arguing for a Hip Hop that is inclusive of all bodies: straight, queer, dis/abled and non-binary.

With the success of artists like Andy Mkosi and Dope Saint Jude, along with community-organising efforts by Natasha C Tafari (all featured in this part), among many others, Hip

Hop culture continues Godessa's earlier efforts to remix gender mindsets, reframe the way we talk about gender and sexuality, and the way we represent the body. As we witness throughout these pages, a new generation of Hip Hop artists has emerged and is committed to taking an intersectional approach to race, class, gender and sexuality through a re-engagement with the histories and legacies of Hip Hop culture and our broader communities. This powerful, transformative work within Hip Hop has the potential to influence social transformation beyond Hip Hop, for, as Andy Mkosi warns in her interview with H Samy Alim: 'Everywhere you go, all these spaces, they're problematic. We all problematic.'

#### **PART FOUR: Reality check: The business of music**

Part Four of the book provides participants' views on the ways in which aspiring artists can navigate careers in a music industry that, historically, has been shaped by unequal relations of power along the lines of race, gender and class, both during and after the colonial era. It ends with a scholarly reflection on the ways in which the challenges in the music industry resonate with those faced by scholars in the academy. Ultimately, foundational changes need to be made on a macroeconomic level to address inequities in both the music industry and the academy. Provocatively, the final chapter in this section argues that the problem of corporate monopolisation in the music industry is similar to the problem of corporate monopolisation of scholarly publishing, to the extent that democratic rights to free speech and academic freedom are undermined. Ultimately, it argues that if calls for the decolonisation of knowledge are to be heeded, knowledge needs to be decommodified.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it is important to note that this book is unique precisely because it decentres the voices of the scholars who have long been writing about Hip Hop. This is a first for South African Hip Hop scholarship. The book's multi-genre approach, which arranges writing by theme and not by genre, is intended to decentralise the authority of the scholars in this edited volume – to place academics alongside the contributions of the artists and activists who have cut, mixed and remixed Hip Hop politics, activism and aesthetics to speak to their specific respective locations and agendas. We recognise, as Alim – influenced by Spady's (1991) 'hiphopography' – wrote, that Hip Hop artists are not merely cultural producers and consumers. They 'are "cultural critics" and "cultural theorists" whose thoughts and ideas help us to make sense of one of the most important cultural movements of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries' (Alim 2006:11). This is why we insist on direct engagement with the cultural creators of Hip Hop.

Multiple voices, which appear as authors and co-authors, feature here in the tradition of Hip Hop's polyphonic approach to music production – from the lyricist dropping 16 bars of verse, which feature multisyllabic rhymes that are often intertextual and layered, and who may share a track with other MCs and singers (itself polyphonic); to the producer who samples music and media from a range of sources to create new music and media forms (more polyphony); to the DJ whose turntablism cuts, mixes and scratches a range of sounds and voices to move the crowd (yet more polyphony); to the graff artist whose textual and iconic styles of production often reference a range of media and texts (polyphony of a visual and textual kind, cutting across modalities); and to the breakdancer interpreting and remixing a range of cultural references, histories and dance styles (polyphony in yet another modality).

This volume is therefore like a park jam or block party, bringing together many voices, styles and modalities in ways that can be both celebratory and unpredictable. We have designed it this way in an intentional effort to claim public spaces that appear to be hostile to black, working-class subjects, the academy included. Or better still, as is the case with the #IntheKeyofB EP associated with this book, we present a polyphony of voices and styles in order to sample, cut and remix what counts as scholarship in a context where scholars are debating what it means to decolonise the academy and challenge hegemonic approaches to knowledge production, distribution, teaching and learning. Like the block party and the park jam, this edited volume is meant to produce scholarship that claims hegemonic spaces that are historically hostile to black modes of thought and articulation in an effort to rethink and remix our understanding of scholarship.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> In this book, we define the racial categories of black and coloured as colonial and apartheid constructs created to design an unequal South African society. As with Haupt's book, *Static*, the editors of the volume view race as socially and politically constructed. We take our cue from Zimitri Erasmus, the editor of the seminal work *Coloured by History, Shaped by Place: New Perspectives on Coloured Identities in Cape Town*. In an editor's note prior to the introduction of the book, Erasmus frames the work's exploration of 'coloured' identity politics in the following way: There is no such thing as the Black 'race'. Blackness, whiteness and colouredness exist, but they are cultural, historical and political identities. To talk about 'race mixture', 'miscegenation', 'inter-racial' sex and 'mixed descent' is to use terms and habits of thought inherited from the very 'rare science' that was used to justify oppression, brutality and

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the marginalisation of ‘bastard peoples’. To remind us of their ignoble origins, these terms have been used in quotation marks throughout. (Erasmus 2001: 12) Erasmus refutes biologically essentialist thinking on race that was employed to justify racist oppression during the colonial occupation of Africa as well as during 48 years of apartheid in South Africa. In order to make her position clear, she elects to include the editor’s note as well as to use a number of contested terms in quotation marks throughout the edited volume. Neva Again does not employ the use of quotation marks throughout, but the editors hope that this note suffices to signal its position they view racial identities as culturally, historically and politically constructed.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhN\\_GzCbH0I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vhN_GzCbH0I)

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