THE IMAGINARY SPACE: DEVELOPING MODELS FOR A MALAYSIAN/WESTERN ELECTROACOUSTIC MUSIC

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRAK

Di ruang khayalan The projek antara budaya penyelidikan adalah terletak dalam persekitaran prestasi electroacoustic. Siri unik hasil muzik dan model-model yang mencerminkan simbiosis muzik seni Malaysia dan Barat melalui komposisi dan prestasi dicipta. Model untuk muzik electroacoustic dan penyelidikan diterajui amalan di Malaysia, mengandungi penyiasatan terhadap unsur-unsur seni dan budaya, telah ditubuhkan. Bunyi dan prestasi amalan dari tradisi setiap telah dikesan, didokumenkan, kebudayaan dan saintifik dianalisis dan digunakan untuk mengikat baru dunia sonic dan kawasan melalui simbiosis dan manipulasi elektronik. Kajian ini dirumuskan teori-teori interaksi gaya muzik dan prestasi, nilai-nilai dan struktur-struktur yang penting kepada kedua-dua tradisi telah dikenal pasti dan ditetapkan, diserap dan dinyatakan semula. Penting untuk projek ini adalah satu komitmen untuk memahami budaya antara satu sama lain, membangunkan bermakna Pertukaran dan mencipta 'Ruang khayalan' untuk muzik baru muncul. Berdasarkan pada Cloonan et al (2005), penyiasatan aktiviti antara budaya yang telah ditentukan melalui proses-proses untuk membangunkan pengetahuan dalam diri kita, orang lain, dan interaksi dialogical. Dikenakan kepada komposisi dan kerjasama, ini terlibat membangunkan konteks untuk pemahaman melalui budaya Malaysia, idea-idea teori dan falsafah Barat, contextualisation budaya, dan connectivities antarabangsa yang lampau dan semasa dalam muzik. Lima fasa disiasat sambungan dan konteks selera seperti serunai, flute hidung, flute Barat, John Cage Memori cenderahati, organ paip, dan model pembangunan. Kesimpulannya, kami menawarkan kritikan mencerminkan projek dan laluan penyelidikan pada masa hadapan.

ABSTRACT

In *The Imaginary Space* project intercultural investigations were located within an electroacoustic performance environment. A unique series of music outcomes and models reflecting symbiosis of Malaysian and Western art music through composition and performance were created. Models for electroacoustic music and practice-led research in Malaysia, incorporating investigations of artistic and cultural elements, were established. Sounds and performance practices from each tradition were traced, documented, culturally and scientifically analysed, and used to forge new sonic worlds and spaces through symbiosis and electronic manipulation. This study formulated theories of interaction as music and performance styles, values and structures integral to both traditions were identified and defined, absorbed and re-expressed. Crucial to this project was a commitment to understanding each other's culture, developing meaningful exchange, and creating the 'imaginary space' for emergent music. Based on Cloonan et al (2005), investigations of intercultural activity were defined through processes for developing knowledge of ourselves, others, and dialogical interaction. Applied to compositions and collaborations, this involved developing a context for understanding through Malaysian cultures, Western theoretical and philosophical ideas, contextualisation of cultures, and past and current international connectivities in music. Five phases investigated connections and contexts of serunai, nose flute, Western flute, John Cage's Memento Memori, pipe organ, and model development. In conclusion, we offer a reflective critique of the project and future research pathways.

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A SHORT GUIDE TO THE STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

1. *The Imaginary Space: Developing Models for an Emergent Malaysian/Western Electroacoustic Music* was a practice led qualitative research project that consisted of numerous actions that culminated in the construction of models for research, intercultural activities, and music composition and performance interactions. Many of the findings are in descriptive form. This style of musicology is used to provide optimal and unique information in the most relevant format.

2. Each Chapter records developing pathways and reflexive critiques as well as objectives, research questions, processes and observations of the research. The results of the research are to be found in these chapters, and are summarized with further reflections in the final chapter. These results in turn led to the formation of the models.

3. As with all artistic practice-led research, a great deal of information is contained in the actual compositions and performances themselves. Some of this can be articulated verbally, some is intuitive and introspective, and almost all of it is subjective. This research project has captured important information from these actions, much of which will become significant elements in future research.

4. Research outputs – journal, book chapter and conference proceedings, performances, recordings and presentations – are listed in Appendix 1 and are included in full in Appendix 1 and Appendix 8. A DVD of videos and recordings is attached.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

> *Intercultural understanding is the ability to participate and negotiate with people in a variety of contexts. Participating and negotiating with people requires an ability to know and understand 'your' culture, 'another's' culture and have skill in working between your own and another's culture. (Cloonan, Spencer & Saunders 2005: 13)*

1.1 Background

The emergence of music for instruments and electronics, or *musique-mixte,* over the last 60 years has signaled major changes to the understanding of the nature, structure and meaning of music, dramatically expanding the idiom, sonic capacities and artistic expressivity. It has also created new performance practices which mark substantial shifts in the relationship of instrumentalists with the music, the instruments, technological processes and with co-performers. The major goal of *The Imaginary Space: Developing Models for an Emergent Malaysian/Western Electroacoustic Music* (Malaysian Government Fundamental Research Grant Scheme 2012-14) has been to make artistic and cultural connections through the medium of *musique-mixte*, to experience contemporary and traditional music practices of Malaysia and to see what we can learn about cultures and interculturality in a context of new electroacoustic composition and performance. Activating this intercultural exchange has demanded stamina and perseverance, and a deep re-appraisal of cultures and artistic experience.

Cloonan, Spencer and Saunders' (ibid.), definition of intercultural understanding provided a useful and idealistic framework as we initiated the research and managed the challenges of musical interculturality in the Malaysian university setting – in a faculty that specialises in Malay traditional music and is now incorporating significant elements of Western music education and expertise. We have established a performative conduit for exchange and connection, and a synthesis of cultures within music, and attempted to establish truly reciprocal interaction. East/West investigation for us in this setting has been about personal experiences,

about sharing and about learning; about absorbing difference, strengthening our artistic practices and striving for a "cultural flux" (Lau, 2004: 39) as new understandings evolve.

Composer Liza Lim has worked extensively in intercultural zones with Western and Non-Western performers and cultural practices of China, Indigenous Australia and northern Europe. She describes these exchanges as transformative education. For her,

> knowledge is not so much passed from one 'side' to another but is generated in the engagements of the exchange. The dialogue itself is inherently 'cultural', that is, a situated social activity within which some processes of understanding can take place (Lim, 2013, para 4).

Transformative education in this sense, how we change through new understandings and connections, underlines our goals within a focused environment to engage with, articulate and disseminate experiential paradigms in music.

New modalities of reflection constructed through performative writing can reveal information through shifting towards a subjective analysis of process and response. This research project hopes to contribute towards the greater understanding of differing and flexible research modes, and emphases that reveal information only available through performance and related activities with practice-led, experiential research methods. Over recent decades, the value of description in music/artistic research has been recognized as crucial to developing true understandings. Marc Leman writes of "shared experiences that involve personal memories and interpretation of the cultural environment" and of how verbal and graphic descriptions provide the space for interaction between experience of involvement and the cultural context (Leman, 2008, p. 7). He further states that

> Any engagement with music is a signified engagement in that it is about personal experiences, intuitive judgements, and interpretations, which are hardly accessible with scientific methods. What musicology can do is provide descriptions which are grounded in a subjective ontology of experienced musical intentions. (ibid, p. 11)

As cultures may focus on artifacts and structures, knowledge from perception, cognition, emotion, and gesture (ibid: 71), can be unified and synthesised through actions, and the creation of imagination. This mediation through the performer's

experience and physical energy associated with cultures, the interactions between performer, composer, audience, the materials of music (for example, the score and instrument) and the performance space provide the setting for action, for reflecting on cultures and synthesis, and for exploring "art as a living reality".

In attempting intercultural musical dialogues we are obliged to question understandings and knowledge of our "own" culture. In this project Western aesthetics, as represented by a selection of writers, relates to a way of thinking that articulates ideas finding resonance in our work: that shed light on the role of art and that assist the initiation of human interconnectedness through musical dialogue. Bruno Nettl has described the basic traits of Western art music as music that is carefully composed and meticulously rehearsed; it may have radical innovation in musical content or style in composition; and it is music that is conceived of as autonomous from other domains of culture (cited in Everett 2004: 221 n.1). This provides a base, albeit arguable, from which we might form aspects of the discussion.

Nicolas Bourriaud (1998) describes the space of contemporary art as one that is active and real-time: "The role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real, whatever the scale chosen by the artist" (p.13). The performance as a "way of living", a processual interaction and response to contexts, ideas and sounds, creates models and methodologies for performative research. The processes create the exchange of ideas and the performance becomes the dialogue where these are realised. The performance then becomes a space to evaluate reality, to re-evaluate values and for self-reflection.

Bourriaud writes about the space between things as a crucial point of interest, an observation he notes is supported by a cluster of French philosophers (2009). In his view, Giles Deleuze redefined the world in terms of flows and gaps between mechanisms; Jean-François Lyotard described it in the form of a system of connections and of "differentials" between various conduits of energy; and Jacques Derrida explored the interval between the oral and the written, the sign and the trace. The important thing here is always the space between things, rather than things themselves, "the event rather than the monument" (Bourriaud, 2009: 11). Additionally, Michel Foucault, according to Bourriaud, is less interested by what an image says than by what it produces – by the behaviour that it generates, and what it

leaves barely seen among the social machinery in which it distributes bodies, spaces and utterances (ibid: 13).

As we explore performative spaces between cultures that emerge in contemporary music for instruments and electronics, these aspects of Western thought create a presence, a placement of values, a configuration and shape to investigate what is going on in performance. We search out the "event rather than the monument" – what can be gained from the processes rather than historical fact and artifact; and we take these experiences into every consequent interchange and reflection. Our aspirations accord with Lim's description of the process of dialogue as an enabler of capacities: "the 'intuitions, sensibilities and orientations' of participants are part of the shape of new feelings, responses, evaluations and understandings that arise: that is, the dialogue shapes the intertwined capacities for response to and for engagement with meaning" (Lim, 2013: para. 2).

That musical crossings can deeply inform and widen the experience of performers, through the absorption of different sonorities, techniques and philosophical approaches to their work, is undeniable. Appropriations of these elements, in general as a response to compositional requirements and personal sonic preferences, can expand performative experience through a sonic and physical embodiment of cultures. These influences may focus on tone production, ornamentation, the gestures of breath, and the freedom to explore unique musical forms and syntheses that can seem to shift from one culture to another, and one performance mode to another.

The instrumental ontologies or characteristics of Western and Eastern instruments create and sustain performative and musical knowledge, carrying specific and imagined information into performance practices and connections. The different traditions, the memories of sounds and associations, the feelings for breath and physical gestures speak one to another, drawing the player into and out of differences of sound and of thought, creating within the performance "art as life". Within the performance, these connections create an enlarged cultural reality as sonic and musical articulations of connections occur through the instrument, the extension of the human player.

In *The Imaginary Space* project, sounds from each tradition were used to forge new sonic worlds and spaces through a series of new electroacoustic compositions

using Western flute, pipe organ, computer and traditional Malaysian instruments such as serunai and Semai nose flute. Methodologies used by each participant differed, but all belonged in essence to artistic practice-led research. Our methods included using the sounds of instruments from traditional Malaysia and the West, exploring the meaning of these sounds, and the effects of combining and contrasting these through dialogue and synthesis. Performance gestures and rituals, values and structures which are integral to both traditions were identified and defined, in the search for new understandings and connectivity. New theories of interaction were also formulated and tested through creation and performance, as questions evolved. This revolved around finding modes of collaboration between composer, technologist and performer; and exploring performance styles incorporating aspects of Malaysian and Western performance ritual. This required deep scrutiny of our Western trained musicians' practices, and an undertaking to analyse our own idiosyncratic cultural studies, unpacking the layers of habit and practice which underpin just how we perform and understand music– the rituals, the behaviours, relationships to audience and space, and layers of meaning within the music.

Finding connections through understanding and synthesis lies at the crux of this project. A fusion of sonic materials from different cultures will not always achieve this result particularly with sounds that may have a certain traditional association, such as affirmation of identity. Out of context, these sounds may well lose cultural significance. Manuela Blackburn (2011) discusses 'sonic souvenirs' as material taken from foreign countries and used in compositions by others – characterized by Simon Emmerson (2000: 115) as a 'magpie' culture that uses bits and pieces from another culture with little understanding. She further cites Emmerson's (2006) discussion of cultural exchange with "appropriation with no exchange or understanding", ie. "a composer plundering local colour for sampling" at one extreme and "true exchange with the possibility of real mutual understanding" at the other. To achieve artistic validity a commitment to understanding cultures, developing meaningful exchange, and creating the space for a reflective, emergent music is vital.

In summary, 'The Imaginary Space' research project is an intercultural investigation situated within an electroacoustic music environment. It has created a unique series of music outcomes that reflect a symbiosis of Malay and Western art

music through composition and performance. The project has established models for electroacoustic music in Malaysia that incorporate multiple investigations of artistic and cultural elements, as well as models for investigation. Sounds and performance practices from each tradition have been traced, documented, culturally and scientifically analysed, then used to forge new sonic worlds and spaces through electronic manipulation. This study formulated and validated theories of interaction as music and performance styles, values and structures integral to both traditions were identified and defined, absorbed and re-expressed. This research is groundbreaking in its approach to intercultural musical research through creation and performance. This has not been done in a Malaysian context before, and rarely anywhere.

1.2 Definitions

A number of definitions are crucial to understanding the thrust and elements of the research. The researchers' understandings of terms and concepts developed through the project, and are summarised briefly as follows:

Intercultural	Interaction between cultures; a synthesis created through cultural knowledge and practices; knowledge generated in the engagements of exchange
Multicultural	Parallel cultures maintaining separation/individuality
Bi-cultural	Feeling at home in or belonging to two cultures
Transcultural	Across cultures; extending through all cultures
Cross-cultural	Dealing with two or more different cultures
Electroacoustic	Music wholly or partly produced through electronic means
Musique-mixte	Music for instrument/s and electronics
Heterotopia	A physical or non-physical space constructed within and between cultures: a space containing the interactions between the performers, the music and the audience.

1.3 Aims and objectives

Aims

1. To build a new capacity for Malaysian music, sustainable through the creation of new artistic works, intercultural understandings and expanded community knowledge;

2. To explore and combine traditional and contemporary music styles in an electronic setting;
3. To investigate culture and aesthetics, Western and Malaysian music principals, composition practices, performance practices, performance space development and the development of new musical works;
4. To develop models for the research, composition and performance of Malaysian electroacoustic music;
5. To create a research model and profile for practice-led artistic research focused on interculturality.

Objectives

1. To create new notated music compositions for instruments and electronics;
2. To present performances and recordings of these new works;
3. To investigate, analyse and document artistic, cultural and performative experience in electroacoustic settings.
4. To formulate theories of intercultural interaction through music creation and performance.

1.4 Literature Review

This literature review documents extant textual and musical influences from five main streams: electroacoustic music research, interculturality, philosophy, Malaysian culture perspectives, Western culture perspectives, and practice-led research methods.

Research models providing inspiration for different parts of the research extend from Australia (in particular the practice-led ethnomusicological projects of the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, http://www.griffith.edu.au/music/queensland-conservatorium-research-centre/research), to Belgium (innovative modes of artistic research at the Orpheus Institute, Gent http://www.orpheusinstituut.be/en/research-centre-orcim), to Finland (for example, the intercultural ethnographic studies occurring at the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki: Riikonen (2011)) and to Asia (for example, ethnomusicological

studies of Lau (2007), Nettl (2005) and Hung (2009)). Electroacoustic research centres, include the Sonic Arts Research Centre, Belfast, UK (http://www.sarc.qub.ac.uk/) and the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique / Musique, Paris, France (http://www.ircam.fr). This research builds on the knowledge gained from these sources in the development of new intercultural theories and models for electroacoustic music in Malaysia.

Important texts on electroacoustic and digital technologies to this research include Leigh Landy's *Understanding the Art of Sound Organization* (2007) in which electroacoustic music is explored, and listeners' receptivity discussed. Models were developed from this by Andrew Blackburn to evaluate audience reception to our performances. Susan Kozel, in *Closer: Performance, Technologies, Phenomenology* (2007) provides an extraordinary account of phenomenological enquiry into dance. This book draws together live performance practice, digital technologies and philosophical approaches relevant to our own investigations.

Intercultural activities have existed for as long as migrations have occurred, but across the last century have increased exponentially along with global connections and travel. Within music, roles and functions of traditional musics have changed, and many composers have incorporated strong influences of cultures other than their own. This study focuses on the shifting cultures of East and West. The literature in question is mostly the music itself, as well as some celebrated reflective texts. Important composers such as Toru Takemitsu (1930-96), Isang Yun (1917-96) and Chou Wen-Chung (born 1923) are examples of this shift between Asian music and the Western/European traditions. Their work has taken the traditions, the sounds and philosophies of their own people, out into the world as newly formed music – music that has successfully sustained, informed and stimulated listeners and practitioners in the West. Writes Takemitsu:

> By cultivating within my own sensitivities those two different traditions of Japan and the West, then, by using them to develop different approaches to composition. I will keep the developing status of my work intact, not by resolving the contradiction between the two traditions, but by emphasizing the contradictions and confronting them. Unstable steps perhaps, but no matter how faltering they may be they will stop me from becoming a keeper of the tombs of tradition. (Takemitsu, 1994: loc. 967)

Composers writing within cross cultural idioms have been described by Everett (2004) as "cultural brokers" who have acquired understanding of more than one set of cultural principles and who function as mediators between native and foreign cultural groups in initiating dialogues (pp. 4-5). American composer Henry Cowell in 1933 described his cross-cultural borrowings as "not an attempt to imitate primitive music, but rather to draw on those materials common to the music of all the peoples of the world, to build a new music particularly relating to our own century" (Cooke, 1998: 279). Canadian composer, Colin McPhee had a wide reaching influence on directing Western understandings of Eastern aesthetics through his work in Bali, particularly his studies of gamelan as documented in *Music in Bali* (1966). Perhaps John Cage had the most celebrated influence on cross cultural music approaches in the twentieth century, mainly through his philosophical and artistic connections to Japan and China, some of which are articulated in *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (1961) and *John Cage: Writer* (2000).

The proximity of Australia and its position as a Western country on the edge of Asia has naturally inspired many of its composers to look towards the East. Peter Sculthorpe (1929 - 2014), for example, became interested in Asian music through recordings he heard in the 1950s of Japanese *Gagaku* (as arranged by Leopold Stokovsky) – recordings that sound quite bland and Westernised now, but that had a lifelong impact on his composition. Perhaps Sculthorpe's most vividly Asian influenced work is *Sun Music III* (1967) for orchestra, with its bountiful use of Balinese gamelan patterns. Anne Boyd (born 1946), a close associate of Sculthorpe, has composed much music that explores aspects of the East, and many of these works are for flute. A series of her works derive inspiration from Balinese gamelan and landscape (Bali Moods I and II), Hong Kong (Cloudy Mountain), and from Japan (Goldfish Through Summer Rain; and Red Sun, Chill Wind). Her writing for flute intentionally captures the sense of the shakuhachi in these works, as a personal expression based on her own identity and sonic ideals. Julia Grenfell, who presents insightful material from personal interviews with the composer, has investigated these influences. She cites Boyd:

> When I write for [the Western flute] it is the shakuhachi which is the source of my inspiration. The shakuhachi …has a special presence in all of my music representing my melodic ideal. It is in a sense my alter ego, being the instrument of my Asian

> dreaming with which I have the closest spiritual identification. In this way my personal musical language has been distilled as a fusion of East and West; this musical language, I believe, is quintessentially *Australasian*. (Grenfell, 2003: 58)

Synthesis such as this creates a rich and imaginative setting for exploring different feelings and intentions of interculturality in a performative space. Other iterations of fusions of East and West might emphasise more superficial or technical aspects of the styles. Whilst multiple genre, nationality and style fusions can be heard throughout the world, considerable discussion remains about achieving an appropriateness of musical and cultural mixing, and one that respects differences of ethos and historical practice reflective of cultural understanding. Frederik Lau (2004) believes that a systemisation of synthesis has created rigidity; that Eastern characteristics such as unusual tuning systems, pentatonic scales, static harmonies and unconventional instrumental timbre have become ubiquitous, and that new wave composers will now emphasise suggestiveness and evocation rather than transplantation of materials. He states

> The blending of elements cannot be understood easily in polarized terms such as the East versus the West. Nor can it be understood as following a set of predictable behaviors and responses. To understand these processes we need new methods that incorporate cultural analysis with the analysis of music and a new paradigm of cultural flux rather than categorization. Understanding cross-cultural synthesis is about understanding boundary crossing and making room for the need to create multiple identities that transcend and shift the global market of classical music. (Lau, 2004: 38-39)

The Cultural Study of Music (Clayton et al, 2003) presents chapters of interest and importance to interculturality studies, as does *Western Music and Its Others* (Born and Hesmondhalgh). In this latter book, John Corbett (2000) described cultural crossings as colonialist attempts to assert a power on the East. Corbett writes about the "spoils" of Oriental musical exploration, of elitism in approach and the desire to reassert Western control (pp.166-168). This is emotive language that can perhaps be justified in a defensive situation, where a culture may feel overrun and devalued by the "magpie cultures" of foreigners from East or West adopting and using certain elements of music to colour or lend a perceived exoticism to their own. In a deeper

sense, these musical crossings could be understood as attempts to recognise and seek knowledge of others, to appreciate and share ideas in a new expression.

Cloonan, Spencer and Saunders (2005) define intercultural activity as processes and skills developed through knowledge of one's own culture, other cultures, and dialogical processes. This material was developed for teacher training purposes in Australia (the Asia Education Foundation) for assistance regarding interaction with the vast Asian student populations there. This definition proved very appropriate for *The Imaginary Space* project adaptations.[1]

A new group established at the University of Cambridge – Commonwealth Intercultural Arts Network (CIAN) – is working to establish connections and promotion of intercultural creativities. New publications, conferences and forums are developing and some can be accessed on their website.[2] Jean Penny and Andrew Blackburn were Visiting Fellows there in 2013, working to set up this network and activities. At this three-week residency, ideas of developing philosophical frameworks for our intercultural research began to emerge. The importance of writers such as Gadamer, Bourriaud, Lau, Ingold and others became significant elements of the research framework. The ideas found in these writings assisted the researchers articulate and provide structures for ideas which had arisen from the research actions and responses.

The intention was to discover the bi-directional cultural connections which occur in this environment and frame the findings within the philosophical ideas of prominent thinkers and writers. The research processes consisted of continual dialogic negotiation, of mediation between our (Western) expectations and those of our artistic colleagues in Malaysia. In this context, Gadamer's assertion that 'understanding is always interpretation' (Gadamer1987: 307) is particularly important, and guided us through the meanings and dialogues of interculturality. Understanding will always be coloured by a person's experience, knowledge and preconceptions, leading to interpretation. In the process of unravelling our (Western) hermeneutical understanding of art, the conditions of understanding itself are clarified by Gadamer as:

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[1] http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/verve/_resources/SBdeveloping_intercultural_understanding.pdf
[2] www.educ.cam.ac.uk/centres/ce/initiationves/projects/cian/

> Intercultural dialogue is reliant on hermeneutics, which 'clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place' (Gadamer 1975: 263).

and its

> ... ability to disrupt and challenge customary expectations ... [attributing] an ethical significance to art as being able to reveal the limitations of fixed cultural expectancy and to open the spectator towards the other and the different (Davey 2011: para. 8).

Expanding the approach of Gadamer, a theoretical framing through the phenomenological writings of Maurice Merleau-Ponty offers further philosophical context. Providing a practical application for these in this context, Fred Dallmayr asserts the '... relevance of hermeneutics for cross-cultural or inter-cultural understanding and dialog...' (Dallmayr 2009: 24) emphasizing a necessary tie between interactive dialogue and concrete embodied engagement. This tie suggests mutual compatibility between Gadamerian hermeneutics and existential phenomenology, and encourages interpretative multiplicity, which we have found helpful to understand different responses we, as researchers, have encountered.

Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* (2008) and Introduction to Foucault's *Manet and the Object of Painting* (2009/11) posit ideas of performance as a way of living, as processual interaction, and the importance of the 'space between things'. This leads back to Foucault's concepts of heterotopia in *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe.* (1983), *Manet and the Object of Painting* (2009/11) and *Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias* (1967). Our adaptation of this concept in the final analysis of intercultural performance was critical.

Most of our Malaysian traditional culture information has emerged from personal interactions, discussions, music listening and observation. Aspects and characteristics of Malaysian society have also assisted the researcher's understanding of people and interactions. In Malaysia there have been shifts that include Western styled Malay pop songs, and a rise in assorted syncretic music. Diverse traditions have arrived in Malaysia from many parts of the world over the centuries: from Java, from the Middle East, from China and India, from Portugal, the Netherlands and Britain, amongst others. An amalgamation of styles that reflects the various colonisations and migrations to the country is evidenced in much traditional Malaysian music. Instruments and techniques such as the oud/gambus from the Middle East; Baroque

violin techniques brought from Europe and still used in traditional playing today; the Portuguese folk song idioms incorporated into styles such as Keruncung; the Hindu influences seen in Wayang Kulit; and the introduction of functional harmony and "foreign" elements by composers such as P. Ramlee to songs in Malaysia. Several scholars have documented these multicultural influences and practices. These include Mohd Hassan Abdullah, in *Musical Cultures of Malaysia* (n.d.), with an overview of music in Malaysia discussing the populations, the multi-cultural backgrounds and influences, and brief discussions of styles of Malay, Chinese, Indian and Western music found here; and Patricia Matusky and Tan Sooi Beng's *The Music of Malaysia* (2004) which details the classical, folk, and syncretic traditions, providing a general reference that includes many elements of musical practices.

Both main researchers in this project are experienced in practice-led research (see, for example, Penny, 2009 and Blackburn, 2011). Important literature on methodologies in music performance research to this project includes Marc Leman's *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology* (2008) which posits theories of embodied music cognition, and discussions of ecological mediations and interaction. He forwards the need for description in experiential research, describes hermeneutic methods and cultural meanings, and electronics as the mediator that allows fluent interaction. Darla Crispin, in *Sound and Score* (2014) additionally supports the value of performer experiential research. In this she discusses the position of the musician's 'act', in relation to the performance practice and activity and cites Coessens' model in which the act of performance is the central activity (ibid: 50) – and this correlates with our study here, that the performance and actions evolving from that are the subjects of research. This follows on from earlier contributions to practice-led research, including *The artistic turn: A manifesto* (Coessens, Crispin and Douglas, 2009) which discusses changes occurring in contemporary musicology and artistic research. This methodology discussion reflects the ideas and practices of the main researchers of this project. Finally, the publication *Art and Artistic Research* (Caduff, Siegenthaler and Walchli, 2010) containing differing reflections on the connections of art and research and the effectiveness of combining theory and practice in this environment has supported and posited strong arguments for practice-led methods.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN

Artistic practices have for some decades now been recognized as the space for realization of artistic ideas, creative interactivities, and the articulation of living realities. As Darla Crispin states: “In artistic research, the unique personality of the artist-researcher is not something to be excluded from the research process but, on the contrary, is an invaluable touchstone for testing and evaluating the evidence generated by that process.” (Crispin 2014: 47) This statement reflects the emphasis of previous work of the main researchers of *The Imaginary Space*: that the core of the research emanates from the practice of participant /researchers; that the processes of collaboration between participants is a significant contribution to new knowledge of diverse cultures; and that the research is progressive, reflective and responsive to changing understandings through the duration of the project.

The underlying thrust of this research was to discover lines of intercultural connection through music, to use these in creative and innovative ways, and to expand knowledge and understandings of each culture. Since establishment, the project has developed a research plan encompassing investigations of culture and aesthetics, Western and Malaysian music principals, composition practices, performance practices, performance space development and the development of new musical works that attempt to create connections and understandings through synthesis of ideas and sounds. Investigations and analyses of the shifting experiences of performers in intercultural, electroacoustic settings underpin a practice-led artistic research model centred on performance, including ethnography, sound analysis, gesture and ritual identification, explorations of cultural values and performance structures. Crucial to this project was a commitment to understanding each other’s culture, developing meaningful exchange, and creating the ‘imaginary space’ for emergent music.

Figure 1. En Affendi Bin Ramli, Dr Jean Penny, Dr Andrew Blackburn: *Screaming Serunai* Collaborations. June 2012.

Figure 2. Dr Andrew Blackburn, Field trip, Kelantan. October 2012

2.1 Methods and Methodologies: Developing the Models

Beginning with culture and musical background investigations, the compositions and performances initiated new models for research and collaboration. Performances provided the pivotal points in the research, as both outcomes of extensive exploration and rehearsal, and sources for further investigation and reflection. Experimentation with sound and diffusion, performance elements such as interpretation, observation of physical and mental responses, and developing modes of presentation occurred as composers and performers developed pieces together, analysing sounds, interactions and processes. Theories underpinning each work were tried and validated in the development and presentation of performances, and were further modeled in a variety of cultural contexts and locations.

The mind map below (Figure 3) indicates areas of importance in the research, and a lineal representation of how these processes began to evolve in the initial development of the project. Subsequent processes of engagement through the creation of new works, creation of performances and evaluations of new knowledge activated researcher/participant collaborations between composers and performers.

As noted in the introduction, the value of description in music/artistic research has been recognized as crucial to developing true understandings. Particularly relevant to this project is Leman's emphasis on the importance of verbal and graphic

descriptions in providing the space for interaction between experience of involvement and the cultural context (Leman, 2008: 7). He further states that musical engagement is about "personal experiences, intuitive judgements, and interpretations" that are best represented by "descriptions which are grounded in a subjective ontology of experienced musical intentions." (ibid: 11). *The Imaginary Space* project utilised significant descriptive responses to elicit and articulate experiential information throughout each phase. These phases were evolutionary, revealing progressive and developing information, and each one influenced subsequent research phases.

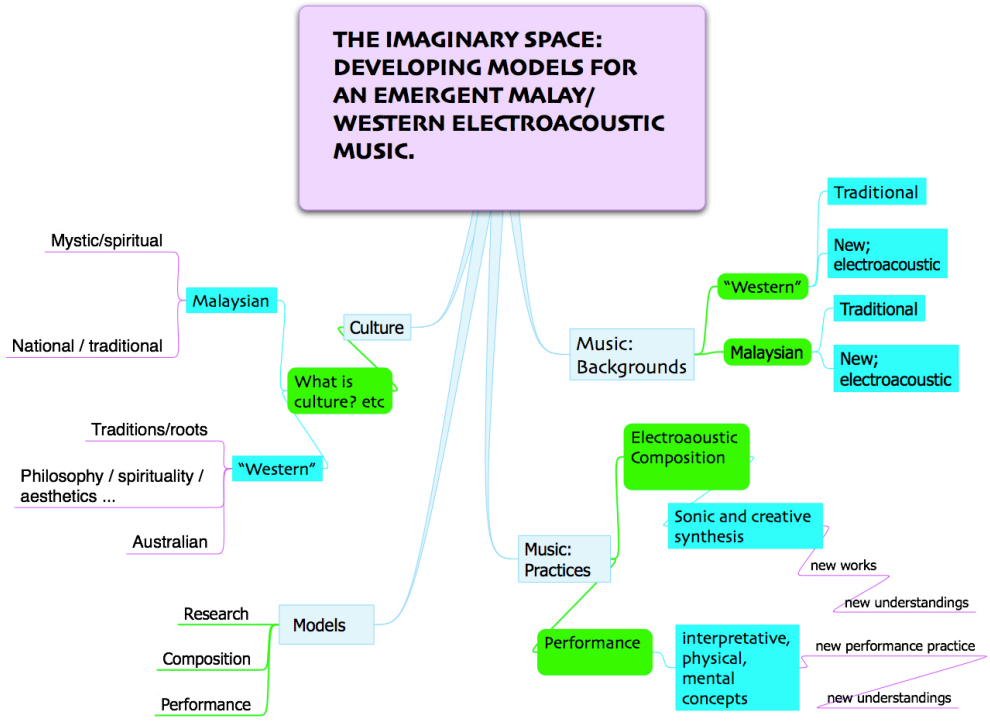


Figure 3: Initial Research Plan mind map

As researchers and performers, responding to the acquired knowledge and perceived challenges of working at this cultural interface, clarifying our purpose and methodology has been continuous. What is intercultural and what are the conditions necessary for its presence? Interculturality is a form of communication, strongly associated with interdisciplinarity – as Allwood observes:

> Intercultural communication or communication between people of different cultural backgrounds has always been and will probably remain an important precondition of human co-existence on earth. … It is not cultures that communicate, whatever that might imply, but

> people (and possibly social institutions) with different cultural backgrounds that do. (Allwood 1995: 1)

Of 'communication' between cultures we adopt Allwood's idea:

> ... sharing .. information between people on different levels of awareness and control. ... In an intercultural context, this can become a problem particularly with features in communication about which people have low degree of awareness and find difficult to control. (Allwood 1995: 3)

Here an important caveat is noted: the mindfulness of awareness and control. A dialogical view of culture sees it as dynamic, vibrant and ever-changing. Culture can be perceived as something that is ordinary, everyday, but having the ability to see beyond and about itself (Bosted, Brandist, Evensen, Faber 2004: 3). One composition under discussion here, *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai,* manifests as a work grounded in the everyday sounds of Malaysia, yet made anew with the addition of Western concert flute and live DSP, reflecting a primary intent of this study: to explore how these two sound sets may be culturally understood, and what is occurring in the minds of creators, performers, technologists and listeners as the sounds interact together. In interdisciplinary artistic contexts, interculturality desires and is nurtured by the contribution and possibilities of different forms of expression, generating unspoken, intuitive and embodied knowledge. An intercultural artistic engagement creates a space for imaginative response, for connection and experiential exchange.

The diagram below (Figure 4) shows the processes and collaborations activated in the project. The researcher/participants worked together with composers in a collaborative dialogue in the conceptualisation of both the project as a whole and the works created. Awareness of cultural and intercultural contexts facilitated the artistic responses and investigations of cultural meanings in music. The compositions also included creative input from the performers, and sometimes this was through working together with the composer, and sometimes developing the works further through experimentations and technological mediation. Rehearsal processes worked toward constructing performances and interpreting the works as realisation of cultural interconnectivity. The performances led to reflective evaluation from both audiences and participants, and documentations of the personal experiences of the work.

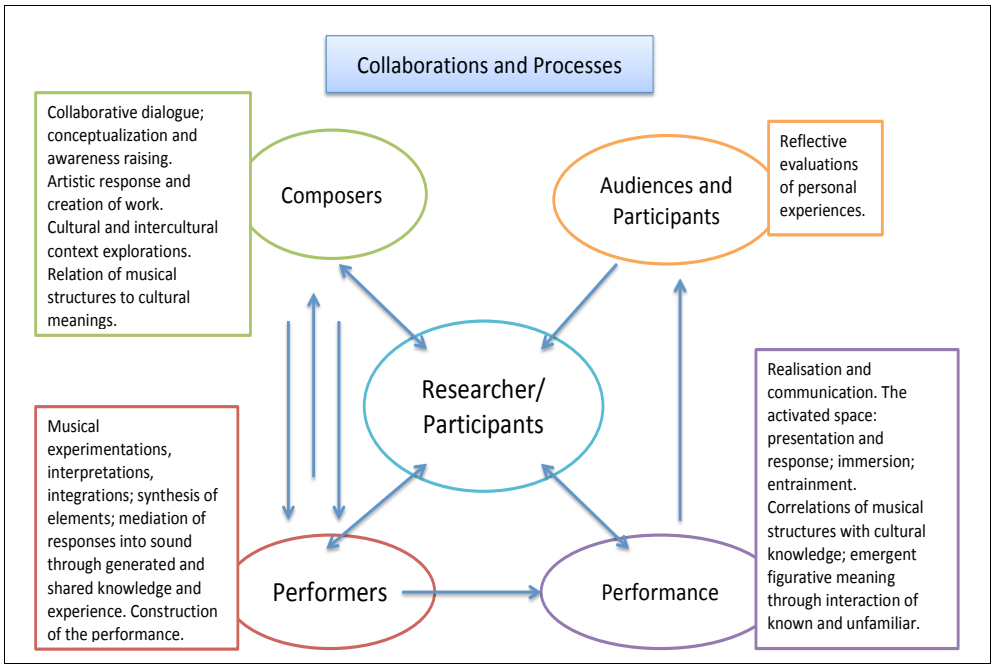


Figure 4. Collaborations and Processes

2.2 Research questions

Initial questions:

1. What are the similarities and differences in the expression of musical elements that distinguish Malay and western art music?
2. How can a unique form of intercultural Malay/Western electroacoustic music be established?
3. What can composers, performers and audiences learn from this process?

Evolving questions:

1. How do we negotiate the spaces between internal and external interculturalities, create a musical 'correspondence', a shared experience of cultural diversities, and how do these inform our understandings?
2. How can the environment of the performance – the ecology and study of relationships – create new knowledge?

3. How does ‘clarity of understanding’ through context occur?
4. How can art open the listener/spectator to the other and the different?
5. How can the performance space be a place of correspondence/dialogue?
6. How is a specific performance ‘life/art in action’?
7. How can the space between cultures be represented/explored and defined through performance?
8. How can a synthesis of East/West cultural elements create understanding in music?
9. How do Malaysians comprehend electroacoustic music? How important is the recognition of ‘Malaysian’ sounds to understandings of the music?
10. What is the role of live electronics in the works of the project?
11. How is compositional and performance creativity influenced by the juxtaposition of musical knowledge acquired from different cultural practices within the realm of electroacoustic music?
12. How do performances of these works create a space for intercultural symbiosis and new knowledge?

2.3 Research Structure

The structure of this project evolved according to composition creation, related cultural investigations and the processes of interculturality. The performative knowledge that emerged from the composition realisations was applied to the next research actions, and these analyses lead on to parallel explorations of perspectives, the processes of engagement and reflexive analysis developed in a progressive manner. Each phase of the research built new knowledge that was then utilized in the following phases (see Figure 5). The final analysis occurred in the development of models for research and intercultural actions.

The Phases (Outlines)

Phase 1: *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai* (2011-12) for flute, fixed sound track, live electronics and chanter (2012). A collaborative re-development of Affendi bin Ramli’s composition for fixed sound.

Investigations:

Serunai and traditional instrument performance practices
Dialogical composition structure as intercultural exploration
The role of the live electronics as context and mediation
Analysis of sound-structure of existing work, heirachy of pitch, significance of heartbeat, movement of sound, sense of distance and presence – sonic, time, physical, mystical elements.
Malay cultural elements
Wayang kulit practices
How can the space between cultures be represented/explored and defined through performance of this work?
How does this work create a context for understanding?

Phase 2: *Synergies of Breath* (2013) – a collaborative composition with Valerie Ross in a work for fixed sound, live flute and live electronics (2 versions) – and *Two Improvisations* for flute and electronics (2012-14) based on nose flute melodies for Western flute and *Plogue Bidule*.

Investigations:

Divergent practices of the Malaysian aboriginal nose flute, as heard in the areas of Perak and Pahang, and the extended Western flute.
A musical context and a site for cultural interchange exploring breath techniques, organological and tuning similarities and differences, and timbrel manipulation techniques.
The role of electronics as mediator of space and in the expression of cultures
How can the space between cultures be represented/explored and defined through performance of this work?
How does this work create a context for understanding?

Phase 3: *Memento Memori*. A collaborative production of John Cage's *Memento Memori* based on Tan Twan Eng's *The Garden of Evening Mists* with Warren Burt and Catherine Schieve.

Investigations:

Hermeneutical study of cultures: Malaysian (literature, musical elements – live, images); Western (idea; creation; sonic basis); Interaction (participation; commitment/non)

Performance, composition, language, music, images, presentation and reception of the work

Identifying cultural semiotics: language, music, narrative

Landy's musical comprehension reception

Roles of technology as revealer, facilitator; sound and image; mediator; conceptual tool; enhancer of understanding

How can the space between cultures be represented/explored and defined through performance of this work?

How does this work create a context for understanding?

Phase 4: The Pipe Organ. An investigation of the heritage and practice of the pipe organ in Malaysia, and development of new works exploring interculturalities.

Investigations:

Identification of cultural contexts

Hermeneutics

Role of sustainability in performance practices

Disruption of cultural expectations

Phase 5: Model development

Models of investigation

Models as descriptive experience

Models as ways of activating/representing interculturalism

An overview of the research structure is given in Figure 5 below, indicating each phase with parallel developments and processes.

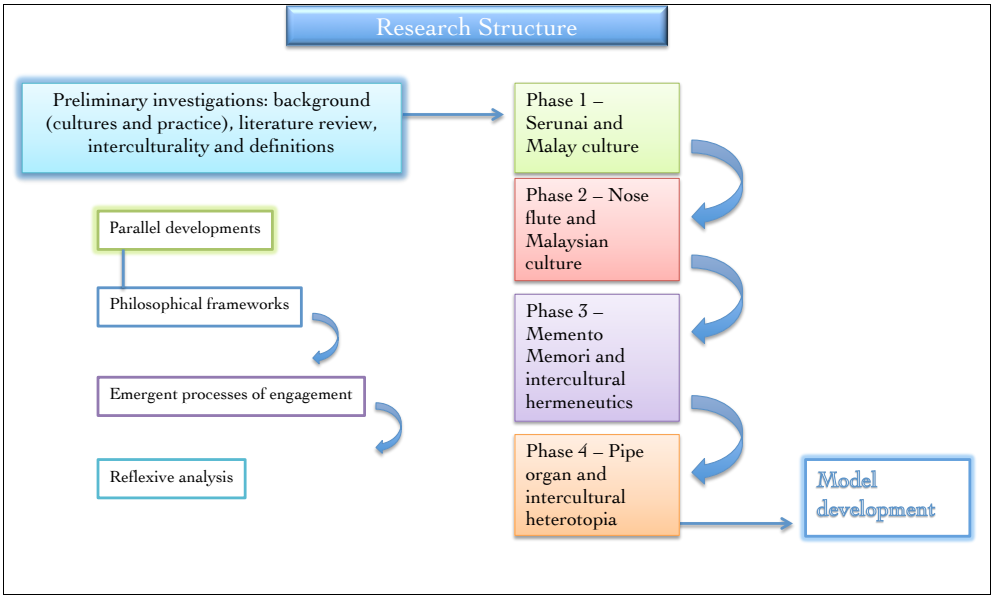


Figure 5. Research structure

CHAPTER 3: EMERGING THEORETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORKS

During the project important theoretical and philosophical research frameworks began to emerge. A fusion of theory and praxis assisted with analysis and articulation of intercultural and artistic experience, with the work grounded in practice and viewed at times through the writings of Gadamer, Ingold, Bourriaud, and Foucault. In addition, the writings of scholars such as Lau, Landy and Leman provided pertinent reference and philosophically based argument. The exemplar of John Cage as a pioneering interculturalist, and his explorations of Chinese and Japanese philosophies and cultures was also important, particularly with developing understandings and findings of the Malaysian iteration of his work in Phase 3. Whilst this project was unable to investigate these theories in depth, their importance in clarifying the researchers' ways of thinking and ways of knowing was significant.

This chapter gives a brief outline of the major ways these writers' works were influential in the project.

1. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002)

Main references: *Truth and Method* (1960/75)

Philosophical Hermeneutics (1976)

Relevance to project: Contexts for understanding

Clarification of understanding as an event

Understanding as interpretation

Concept of the 'Fusion of Horizons' (fusion of different perspectives resulting in enhanced understanding of both)

Dialectics

Reception

Hermeneutics

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*:

How does 'clarity of understanding' through context occur?

How can art open the listener/spectator to the other and the different?

How does the interpretation of art reveal a person's knowledge and experience?

How can hermeneutics lead to intercultural dialogue and understanding?

By revealing what is hidden, art opens intellectual and spiritual places and this enlarges perception, and with it cognition…..only if we understand [music], if it is 'clear' to us, it is present for us as an artistic composition (Gadamer 1960)

2. Tim Ingold (b.1948)

Main references: *Making: Anthropology, Archaeology, Art and Architecture* (2011)

Bringing things to life: Creative entanglements in a world of materials (2008)

Relevance to project: A new model for the creation of things that is an ontology of flow, of growth and movement

Processes and correspondences

Thinking through making

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*:

How can the performance space be a place of correspondence/dialogue?

How can the act of performance (making) be a way of thinking?

Participation as "thinging"

How can interculturalities become ontology of flow, growth and movement?

A '…thing… is a 'going on', or better a place where several goings on become entwined. To observe a thing is not to be locked out but to be invited in to the gathering. We participate, as Heidegger rather enigmatically put it, in the thing' thinging in a worldling world' (Ingold 2008: 6).

3. Nicolas Bourriaud (b.1965)

Main references: *Relational Aesthetics*. (2008)

Introduction to Foucault, M.: *Manet and the Object of Painting* (2009/11)

Relevance to project: Performance as a way of living

Performance as a processual interaction

Performance as a response to context, ideas and sounds

Art as a model of action

The importance of the 'space between things'

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*

How is a specific performance 'life/art in action'?

How can interaction be defined through performance?

How can the space between cultures be represented through performance?

The role of artworks is no longer to form imaginary and utopian realities but to actually be ways of living and models of action within the existing real, whatever the scale chosen by the artist. (Bourriaud 1998)

4. Michel Foucault (1926-84)

Main references *Ceci N'est Pas Une Pipe* (1983)

Manet and the Object of Painting (2009/11)

Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias (1967)

Relevance to project: Concepts of heterotopia and space

Signification and representation

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*

How can heterotopia be understood in the performance space?

How can the spaces between things (in this case cultures) be explored and defined?

What representations can add meaning to intercultural exchanges?

It is not, in fact, a question of those calligrams that by turns bring into play the subordination of signs to form (a cloud of words and letters taking the shape they designate), then of form to sign (the figure dissecting itself into alphabetical elements). Nor is it any longer a question of those collages or reproductions that capture the cut out form of letters in fragments of objects; but rather the intersection within the same medium of representation by resemblance and or representation by signs. Which presupposes that they meet in quite another space than that of the painting. (Foucault, M. tr Harkness, J. 1983, p. 33-34)

5. John Cage (1912-92)

Main references: *Ryoanji*. Score for flute and percussion. (1983/4)

Silence: Lectures and Writings by John Cage (1961)

Memento Memori (Roaratorio score)

Relevance to project: Pioneering intercultural work

East/West explorations

Synthesis of cultural ideas in music

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*:

How can a synthesis of East/West cultural elements create understanding in music?

How can interculturality create the space for self and other exploration?

How can re-location of a work (*Memento Memori*) lead to new understandings through hermeneutics?

Art is sort of an experimental station in which one tries out living (Cage, 1981)

6. Frederick Lau

Main reference: Fusion or Fission: Contemporary Chinese music. In Everett and Lau (Eds). *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music.* (2004).

Relevance to project: Theories of interculturality

Observations of East/West music composition

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*:

How can we develop new methods that incorporate cultural analysis within a paradigm of cultural flux?

How can we define and accommodate multiple identities through creating a symbiosis in music?

The blending of elements cannot be understood easily in polarized terms such as the East versus the West. Nor can it be understood as following a set of predictable behaviors and responses. To understand these processes we need new methods that incorporate cultural analysis with the analysis of music and a new paradigm of cultural flux rather than categorization. Understanding cross-cultural synthesis is about understanding boundary crossing and making room for the need to create multiple identities that transcend and shift the global market of classical music."
(Lau, F. (2007) p. 38-39)

7. Leigh Landy

Main Reference: *Understanding the Art of Sound Organisation* (2007)

Relevance to project: Musical comprehension and reception

The role of technology

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*

How do Malaysians comprehend electroacoustic music?

How important is the recognition of 'Malaysian' sounds to understandings of the music?

How can the 'matrix' be of use to our understandings of interculturality?

What is the role of live electronics in the works of the project?

8. Marc Leman

Main reference: *Embodied Music Cognition and Mediation Technology* (2008)

Relevance to project: Need for description in experiential research

Hermeneutic methods and cultural meanings

Performance as symbolic communication

Electronics as the mediator that allows fluent interaction

Evolving questions for *The Imaginary Space*:

How can the structures of music relate to cultural meanings?

How can personal experiences, intuitive judgments and interpretations be communicated through performance?

Is performance a kind of description?

What cultural knowledge is obtained from gesture?

How can the environment of the performance – the ecology and study of relationships – create new knowledge?

How are cultural values recognized and defined in music?

Any engagement with music is a signified engagement in that it is about personal experiences, intuitive judgments, and interpretations, which are hardly accessible with scientific methods. What musicology can do is provide descriptions which are grounded in a subjective ontology of experienced musical intentions. (Leman 2008: 11)

CHAPTER 4: PHASE 1 – SERUNAI: ACTIVATING DIALOGUE

4.1 Outline

Phase 1 of the project initiated the research activities and the start of intercultural processes. The research team for this phase – Dr Jean Penny, Dr Andrew Blackburn and En Affendi bin Ramli – collaborated in the composition and performance of a musical work that was, in fact, a new version of an already extant work using sound artifacts from Malaysia and electroacoustic processing. The re-imagined version incorporated elements that could be considered Western in basis (Western flute, live electronics, notation) combined with the fixed recorded and processed sound. This new work was constructed as a dialogue between the recorded serunai sounds and the live flute lines – providing a metaphor for intercultural connection. Added to this, digital signal processing of the flute sounds created an environment for exploring the intersection of Malay and Western music elements and cross cultural responses.

Exploration of the serunai – the sonic characteristics, the history and the performance practices – was enriched by a field trip to Kota Bharu, Kelantan, for observation of the Wayang Kulit performance practice there, and interviews with local community leaders. A full transcript of one of these interviews can be found in Appendix 2.

4.2 Aims and objectives of this phase

To explore Malay musical culture through traditional musical practices (Serunai)

To activate Malay/Australian collaboration, and to examine these processes

To create a musical work as a context for intercultural investigation/observation

To perform a work that incorporated elements of two cultures

To observe responses and changes in understandings between the participants

To observe the influence of Malay cultural elements on performance

To use a live electronic performance environment to activate and investigate ways of connecting

To document participant processes and interactions

To evaluate the work as a context of understanding from within the performance space

4.3 Methods/Processes

Researcher/ participant/composer/performer collaborative dialogue;

Conceptualization and cultural awareness raising;

Artistic response and creation of work – score, live electronics;

Cultural and intercultural context explorations;

Relation of musical structures to cultural meanings;

Analysis of fixed sound: structure, pitch, significance of sonic representations (serunai, heartbeat), movement of sound, sense of distance and presence – sonic, time, physical, mystical;

Synthesis of live elements: flute lines and timbre, digital signal processing – creation of the performance context

Performance – reflection – analysis cycle applied to each performance.

The initial stages of cultural investigation for this work created the context for the research. As shown in Figure 6 below, definitions of East and West elements, Malaysian culture and representations and subsequent interactions led to re-assessed understandings of each. An important research action in this period was the field trip to Kelantan where the local Wayang Kulit was observed. Discussions were held with Mr Rahman, Director of the Kota Bharu cultural museum which elicited valuable information and understandings of the Wayang Kulit practices. His explanations of various topics – music structures, comparison of flute and serunai (instrumental and performative), music therapy and spirituality elements, tuning, the place of wayang kulit in the community, and sustainability – gave all researchers a strong understanding of this Malay art form. The additional element of recitation later included in this work related to the Hindu influences and origins of wayang kulit. This narrative was woven into the last section of the work as a chant.

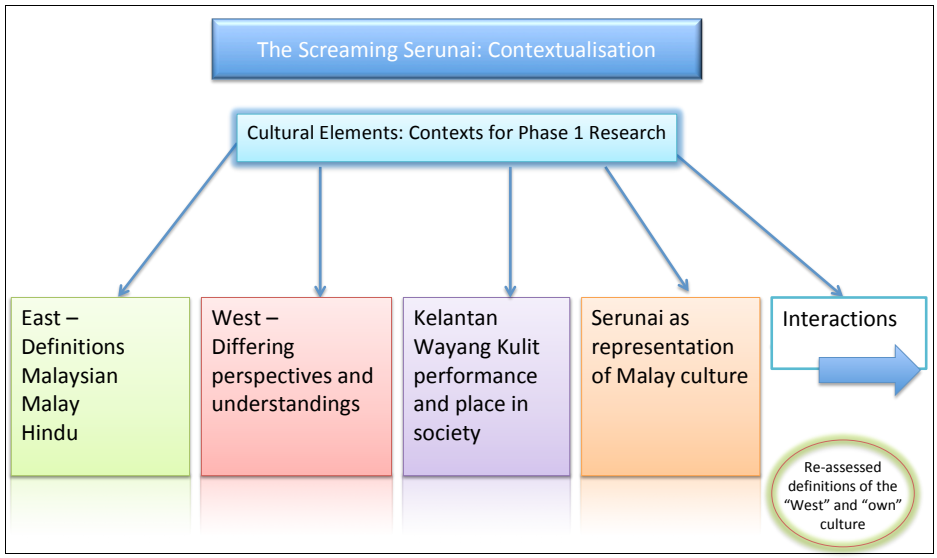


Figure 6. The Curse of the Screaming Serunai Contextualisation

The diagram below (Figure 7) indicates the interactions and intercultural dialogues of this phase. The aim of sharing and cultural exchange, the use of instruments to represent differing cultures, the use of the electronics as cultural mediator, and the progress towards interpretation and understandings of the interchanges.

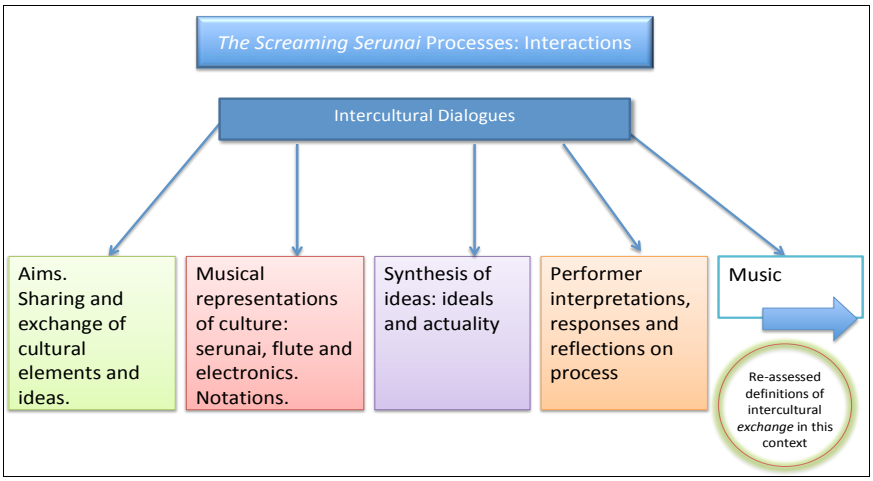


Figure 7: The Curse of the Screaming Serunai Processes

Figure 8 below shows the processes of creation of the work, from the fixed sound file through notation of the flute score, sound manipulation and diffusion, and performance development. These processes are further elaborated by the composer, sound technologist and flautist below.

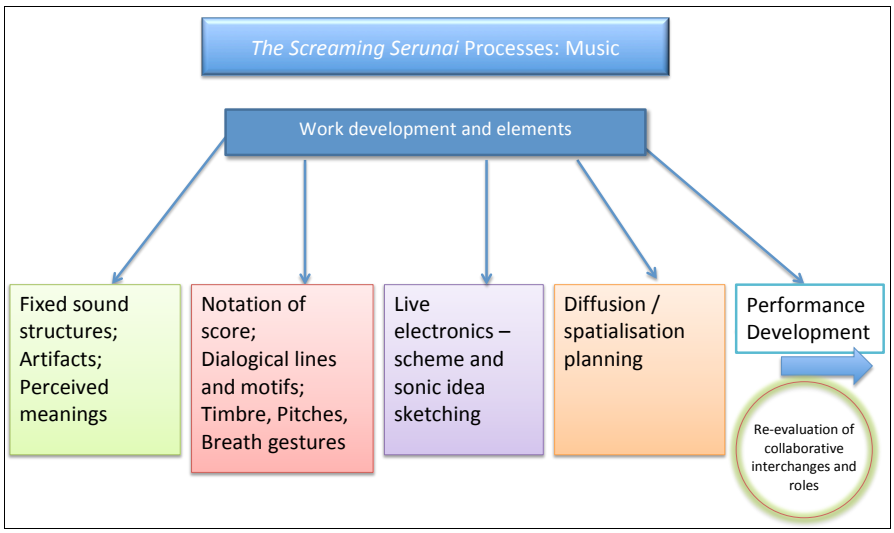


Figure 8: The Curse of the Screaming Serunai Processes

4.4 The work – The Curse of the Screaming Serunai – Ramli (2011/rev 2012)

This work is the second iteration of a previously composed acousmatic work which incorporates sounds from the Malaysian environment and traditional instruments – *serunai* and *bonang*. The *serunai* of Peninsula Malaysia is a quadruple reed wind instrument that originated in Persia, probably arriving in Malaysia at the same time as Islam (Montague 2009: 78); the *bonang* is a small horizontal knobbed gong instrument originating in Javanese gamelan. Western flute and live electronics were incorporated into a pre-existing soundscape, creating an innovative dialogical and dynamic space, and a process for investigating culture and connection. The second version also introduces a brief narrative based on Hindu chant, expanding the use of cultural artifacts, and further reflecting the diversity of Malaysian antiquity. These evolutions of the work point to an increasing interest by the composer, Affendi Ramli, to share his cultural knowledge, and provided a site for cultural discourse. The three collaborators (Ramli, Penny and Blackburn) undertook this project as a test case, to discover information about the viability of these processes for knowledge creation from their individual perspectives.

The composer: Affendi Ramli. The composer's aim in this work was to study the potential acceptance and appreciation of culturally familiar sounds in the context of electroacoustic music by a Malaysian audience. Affendi states, "*The Curse of the Screaming Serunai* is a journey of metaphor that has shaped the sound of a serunai to reflect a hatred of human arrogance", and that, he considers, is a particularly Islamic approach (personal communication, October 2012). Its symbolism derives from the traditional Malay use of this musical instrument as played in the leather puppet show, the *Wayang Kulit*. In this metaphorical way, the composer attempts to bring the listener into a soundworld created by the processing of serunai sound-sources (breath, physical movement, finger slaps and normal sonority) electronically. He depends on the listener's recognition of various sound elements as a key factor to derive meaning and symbolism from the semiotics of sound. The addition of the live flute line creates a dialogue, an embodiment of connection; the transformation and expansions afforded by the live electronic processing facilitate the space for the performers (sound technologist and flautist) to initiate connections, provoke and respond.

Ideally, the composition is presented with eight speakers and public address system at the height and distance of the platform stage. The composer's aims with the work were to:

> a) Review the acceptance of electroacoustic music genre among trained and untrained listeners;
>
> b) Evaluate the potential acceptance and appreciation of electroacoustic music in Malaysia.

The sound technologist: Andrew Blackburn. The collaborative preparation of the DSP for *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai* required a different approach to that usually followed in the creation of such pieces. Commonly, the process evolves in tandem. As technologist, the first part of the process for this work meant developing an intuitive and intellectual understanding of the musical conception of the original soundscape. Affendi clearly wants us to perceive the serunai in a new way, without losing sight of its cultural origin. This could be another metaphor for the piece itself, due to the Malaysian audience's immediate and warm recognition of the serunai within the soundscape at every performance of both versions of the work. There are other familiar sounds in the original too, including the bonang and local environmental sounds. Amongst some Malaysian composers there is a desire to explore and manipulate familiar sounds, rendering them new. This was articulated by Hasnizam Abdul Wahid at a recent conference–:

> I became interested in experimenting with sounds … utilizing gamelan instruments as well as a 'detuned' electric guitar. This exploration resulted in the creation of a composition… employing a series of repetitive notes from a popular gamelan piece called *Timang Burung*. … The final version was … a fusion of traditional musical instruments and western musical ideas. (Hasnizam 2013)

In the *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai,* adding the flute part is intended to highlight an intercultural interplay with 'appropriated' musical interactions, but the composer gave little clue of how he imagined this dialogic soundscape materializing. Developing the DSP thus became a process of discussion, interrogation, trial and error, using Hipno (www.cycling74) plugins, and a shell created in *Plogue Bidule* (www.plogue.com) that allowed experimentation with the fx. The specific plugins are

visible in Figure 9 (below). A guiding principle for this process came from Marco Stroppa who describes the relationship between instrumentalist and electronics as a 'dialectic relationship, where each realm remains what it is, yet, interacts with the others' (Trigueros and Tascon 2008 cited in Penny 2009: 44). In *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai,* this dialectic musical relationship spreads beyond the work itself, and into the cultural domain, as the original iteration of the piece remains itself, yet creates a new 'self' through interaction with the flute – a Malaysian musical environment interacting with the Western flute environment.

Our task in this piece was to develop the piece from a tape work, especially suitable for a fixed installation environment, to a piece of musique-mixte by adding a live flute part to the musical environment. The integrity of the original version of the

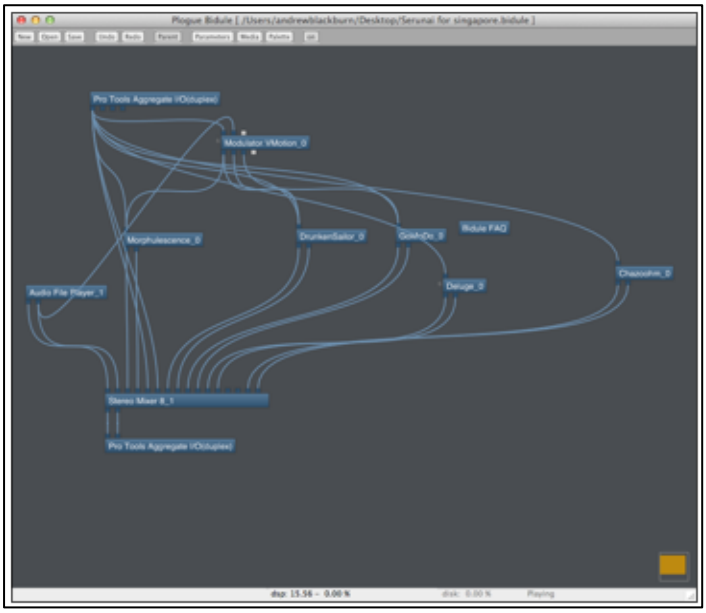


Figure 9: Plogue Bidule screen shot

composition was retained but, by the performance of the flute with its acoustic and processed sounds intermingling and interacting with this, a whole new composition was created.

For the technologist, the first part of the process was to develop both an intuitive and intellectual understanding of the musical conception of the original piece, by discussion, listening and perception. The work is already beautifully structured and crafted. While respecting the many cultural, aural and technological elements which create the musical meaning underpinning the work has been at the forefront of our

minds, equally there is an excitement at the creative prospects the addition of live performative elements offer. The use of a traditional instrument, often manipulated but rarely changed beyond recognition is one point. Affendi clearly wants us to hear the serunai in a new way, but never to lose sight of its aural origin. It might be another metaphor for the piece itself – a piece of traditional music that we hear in a 'new and modern way', but, due to its recognizability, is always understood by its intended, Malaysian audience. It is a comment that Affendi has made several times in our discussions, and though conceptually drawn from the 'accessibility matrix' enunciated by Landy, reveals something of his compositional intent.[3] It has also been a touchstone of the approach or attitude Affendi displayed whilst creating the sounds for the flute. A major part of the intention was to explore how a western flute (Powell .018 solid silver) musically interacts with a serunai (anon, wood and paint with reed). There are other sounds in the original too, including the bonang and environmental sounds. The environmental sounds were importantly recorded in a Malaysian jungle and are woven into the fabric of the soundscape. From our discussion with Affendi, though these sounds are not usually associated with Malay music, they are identifiable to a Malay, in the same way that an Australian living near the rain-forest of Victoria, can identify the sounds of that forest.

In the early stages of the process adding the live flute part, Affendi put the sound of a flute over the original piece without any processing. It highlighted the interplay and some of the explicit musical interactions which he has now explored, but gave little clue to the way these interactions were to be contextualized in the sound scape. However, already certain musical (and cultural) relationships changed as we found in the sections of imitation between the serunai and flute. It leaves one questioning: at times the serunai is leading the process, but after a little, it begins to feel the other way round, with the flute anticipating what is to come in the fixed part.

With parameters defined, developing the dsp of live flute could proceed. It is a process of discussion, and trail and error ("does this work for what you want?"). Using the software Plogue Bidule (www.plogue.com) a shell was created that allowed quick and easy experimentation with the sounds. Standard plugins were incorporated, which

seemed to accord with Affendi's wishes for the sound – largely sourced from the Hipnno set (www.cycling74).

The Flautist: Jean Penny. From the instrumentalist's point of view, the dialogical nature of *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai* reflects a meeting of Malay and Western cultures, and East/West performance practices. (See flute score Appendix 1.) Two distinct entities are presented by the serunai and flute in this work. The computer generated soundscape brings to the foreground questions of difference and similarity for the flautist, stimulating a questioning of sonority and technique, and a desire for exchange. When playing within this soundscape, reflections on the aesthetic and expression of the serunai are led by the perception of a sense of sonic density. This feeling transfers over into the flute performance – in the sensations and awareness evoked, the approaches to flute sonority and gesture these generate, the spatial and cultural distances created, and the potential power of the exchanges. For example, the weight of the sound. When listening to the computer generated sound scape, a certain sense of weight is evident in the sound and sound placement, in context as well as the structure and tone quality. This feeling for the weight transfers over into the flute part – not so much in the score, as in the feelings evoked and the way I am looking at the meaning, the distance and the power of the exchanges taking place.

With the addition of electronic manipulation of my flute sound these issues are further vivified, and given a new context in which the identity of the player may come to the forefront. Here the 'Western' performance perception of self through sound, what Naomi Cumming refers to as the signification of the performer's presence in the sounds and 'presence' in performance as interpreted effect (Cuming 2000:160), can be called into question as alteration of those sounds and contexts occur. If embodiment of sound includes the motivation for musicians to *be* the music (Coessens, Crispin and Douglas 2009:150), does a displaced, disembodied or treated sound displace the performer, create an altered reality, or new understandings of musical engagements? From the performer's perspective, there is a re-orientation in the space; reassessments of projection and tone colour occur, responses to the dialogues of spatialisation and interaction, and a turning in towards the instrument (Penny 2011:190).

Questioning of approaches is generated: whether to incorporate tonal characteristics of the serunai in the flute; or to retain a differentiation of tonal colour and assertiveness of gesture; whether to become the antithesis of the angry and desolate sounds of the serunai; or to embrace the new context through the integration of emotional responses to connection with a musical synthesis of sound. Questions about the realisation of connectivity arise: Is it possible to find a sense of the history and place of a Western flute in this Malaysian sound environment? Is the flute merely a visitor to this scene? With the addition of the electronic manipulation of the flute sound these issues are intensified, and given a new context in which the player encounters, responds, and experiences a re-invented and perhaps disrupted, performative space.

The tools through which we interrogate these issues, our instruments, our performative processes, our technologies, and our accumulated knowledge, bring with them histories and cultures that serve to both distinguish each, and to connect with the other. The Western flute's capacity for sonic malleability and adaptability works easily in this environment, and, through the familiarity of the dialogical framework, provides a sense of integration acceptable and meaningful for audience reception. In the midst of performance one feels a strong push and pull – a melding of styles and techniques and a stepping in and out of familiar sound worlds and cultural habitats. A dialogical space between the cultures is created in which the experience of each becomes sharply defined as the encounter takes place – a clarification of 'the conditions in which understanding takes place' (Gadamer 1975: 263.). A keen sense of sonic collaboration emerges within the performance space, an interweaving and symbiosis of ontologies and histories.

4.4.1 Constructing the performance

Once the fixed sound, flute score and electronic sound parameters were set, the performance construction in the space took place. This evolved from individual rehearsals in the studio, to joint rehearsals in the performance space. As shown in the diagram below (Figure 10), musical experimentations, interpretations and integrations worked towards a synthesis of musical and cultural elements. The responses of the musicians to cultural differences was experienced as outlined by both sound

technologist and flautist (above) and as shared knowledge articulated through the performances.

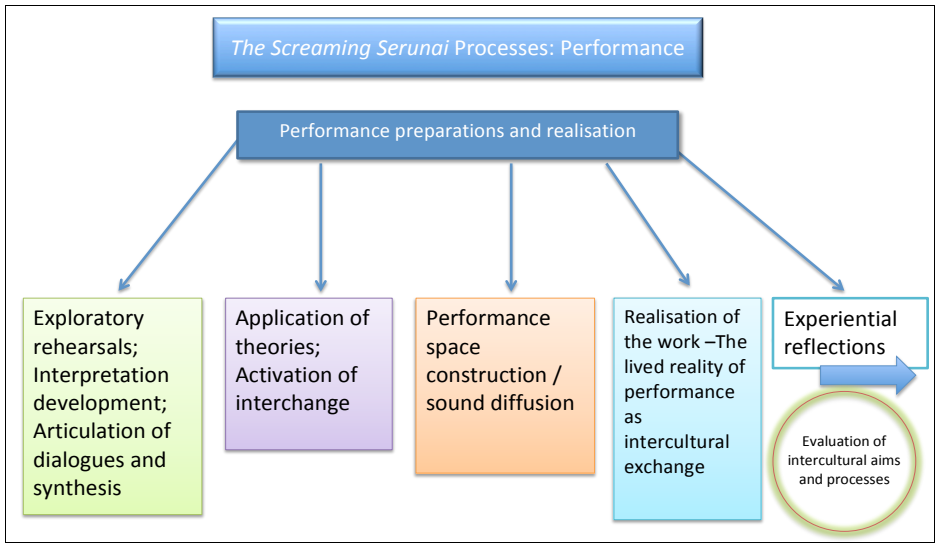


Figure 10. *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai*: Performance processes

4.4.2 Observations

The *Curse of the Screaming Seruani* is a metaphor expressing a 'hatred of human arrogance', drawing its intended Malaysian audience into a familiar sound-world – of serunai, bonang and Hindu Chant, all now absorbed into (in the words of Affendi Ramli) a 'traditional Malaysian' cultural context. That these have their origin in older cultures does not lessen their significance to a Malaysian listener. For non-Malaysian audiences this sound world is exotic, connecting to the flute part by musical devices including imitative interplay. The DSP creates a virtual physical but imaginary space between the two culture sets, connecting and making them accessible to both groups of listeners. The intersecting musical elements of this work – the live flute, the live electronics and the fixed sound – with its plethora of familiar Malaysian audio artifacts – are the tools of intercultural negotiation; this intersection becomes the dialogical and virtual space which is created by electronic mediation. There is an

opening of the performers and 'the spectator towards the other and the different' (Davey, 2011). Tim Ingold speaks of 'objects and things' (Ingold 2008: 4):

> A '…thing… is a 'going on', or better a place where several goings on become entwined. To observe a thing is not to be locked out but to be invited in to the gathering. We participate, as Heidegger rather enigmatically put it, in the thing' thinging in a worldling world' (Ibid: 6).

It is this entwining that establishes the connections in a performance of *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai,* establishing the 'context for understanding' (Gadamer).

Figure 11. En Affendi bin Ramli, Dr Jean Penny, Dr Andrew Blackburn: First performance of *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai*, UPSI, 16/10/12

The final performance of this work two years later (FSKIK, UPSI, 31/10/14) explored the intercultural context through the construction of a musical heterotopia – the space containing the interactions between the performers, the music and the audience. Preparations for this re-activated our 'performance – reflection – analysis' cycle, informed by previous iterations and experience. As we settled into a new studio environment, with high quality sound system and equipment, old performative problems re-surfaced regarding effects functioning and cueing. A multi-channel version of the work was not made available as expected, and returning to the work required considerable perseverance. Looking for timbrel synthesis and fluidity, re-emphasising the role of the live electronics, revising the story contained in the work,

and re-vivifying the characterization of the flute with serunai dialogues achieved a good result, and propelled us into the performance.

Our aim was to re-evaluate the success of interactions, including past actions with the composition processes and real-time interactions between performers and with the audience in a quality sound environment. A survey was given to the audience (online) for collection of responses according to the Landy matrix (See Appendix 5). Responses revealed clear appreciation of the elements of the works. As performers, we were very keen to evaluate the work as a context of understanding from within the new performance space. We were pleased with the sound diffusion and the fact that this created an immersion in the sound as well as vastly improved clarity of all parts; it was easier to *become* the music (Coessens et al, 2009: 150) in this context, and easier to feel the presence of diverse elements. Our personal experience with interculturality was not changed by the performance, but we were able to articulate it and share it with others. New knowledge developed through the processes of engagement with *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai* was thus relayed to others in a shared knowledge environment.

Figure 12. Final performance explorations: *The Screaming Serunai*, 31 October 2014.

CHAPTER 5: PHASE 2 – PENSOL FLUTE: SYNERGIES AND IMPROVISATIONS

5.1 Outline

This Phase focused on the divergent practices of the Malaysian aboriginal nose flute, as heard in the rural areas of Perak and Pahang, and the extended Western flute, as explored and manifest in the performance of new works for flutes and live electronics. Juxtaposing these instruments in an electroacoustic setting generated a new musical context and a site for cultural interchange. Musical works were created:

1. *Synergies of Breath I & II* created by Valerie Ross and Andrew Blackburn, performed by Jean Penny and Andrew Blackburn (see score extract, Appendix 3).
2. *Two Improvisations* on pensol flute melodies created and performed by Jean Penny and Andrew Blackburn (see score extracts Appendix 4).

The creation of the new work for flute with electronics by Malaysian composer, Associate Professor Dr Valerie Ross, was used as the foundation for examining organological features and performative practices of extended Western flute and the Malaysian aboriginal nose flute (pensol) of the Semai people. A second version of this work was prepared for performance at the University of Cambridge in 2013.The *Two Improvisations* were created to explore possible sonic connections and responses to the performance styles of divergent cultures as expressed through the flute. Experiencing the performance of traditional players was integral to this phase, for not only the appreciation of the sounds of the music, but for learning about the underlying attitudes and the place of music in these societies.

5.2 Research Questions and Aims

The following research questions were posed:

(1) What organological similarities and differences exist between the Western flute and the aboriginal (Semai) nose flute?

(2) How can electroacoustic music performance using nose flute, extended Western flute and digital signal processing be used to explore cultural exchange?
(3) What tuning systems, breath and sound manipulation techniques are used by each; how can these interact and what knowledge can be drawn from this?
(4) How does the sound and technique of the Semai flute influence the contemporary flute player's *modis operandi*?
(5) How is compositional and performance creativity influenced by the juxtaposition of musical knowledge acquired from different cultural practices within the realm of electroacoustic music?
(6) How do performances of these works create a space for intercultural symbiosis and new knowledge?

Our aims included:

(1) Compare organological properties of Western flute and Malaysian aboriginal nose flute.
(2) Explore musical origins, identities and experience to find points of connection between two musical aesthetics.
(3) Evaluate breath, tuning and timbrel manipulation through acoustic and electronic techniques.
(4) Document the performers' experience, uncovering responses, actions and understandings as they occur within the act of performance.
(5) Apply new knowledge to the creation and performance of an electroacoustic work embodying techniques of both traditions.

Taking our Western perspective – through studies of aesthetics and traditions – we look for commonalities and differences; we look for what we as performers strive for throughout our lives - communication of ideas, feelings, and responses. For the Orang Asli, the acquisition of cultural and musical heritage is transmitted in a naturalistic environment by practitioners of that culture; nature plays a significant role in how music/sounds are perceived, received and recreated; the creation of a new

piece is attributed to the 'spirits'; they will not take credit as composers but as conveyers of abstract communication and inspiration from the spirit world (Ross, personal communications 2013). As we take these ideas into our own consciousness, we looked for a synthesis that reflects our desire for connection and dialogue. This was not always easy. Working with the compositions that had thus far developed caused us to reflect deeply on what we are trying to achieve; to question the basis of the project, and to drag ourselves into a zone that was not always comfortable – to see what we could discover in that zone, and how we could respond to it.

5.4 Synergies of Breath I

Our methodology with this work as performer/researchers consisted of discussions with the composer, workshops and refinement of ideas, receiving a copy of the score (a conceptual structure of the music) and taking this material into the studio to create a performative outcome. The multiple layers of the musical texture consist of

1. A basic soundscape made up of Malaysian instruments – Jew's harp and pensol flute – with electronically generated textural sounds
2. Live flute motifs (notated)
3. Live electronic effects (created by the sound technologist/designer)
4. A strict layering and timeframe of seventeen thirty-second increments, indicated as markers (requiring a stop watch in performance).

The composer, Valerie Ross, directed our explorations of indigenous culture, particularly towards the Senoi ethnic group of Orang Asli in Peninsular Malaysia of which there are six tribes. Her earlier research had already created sound recordings and investigations of pensol flute construction, playing and culture, and her insights helped us to understand the background, and to be able to interact with the sounds in an informed way.

In these communities, music making may be associated with ritualistic practice and socio-cultural heritage. Our Western perspective of organology: traditionally examined through instrument, performer and performance, with an emphasis on data collection and measurability can be applied in this study but it is a style of research that would only partly answer our questions. Orang Asli organological studies must include reference to attitudinal studies – perhaps based on the feel for the piece of

wood used to make the instrument, the symbolic bird represented by the music, as well as listening, intuition, and belief structures. The pensol player will say that "He is not playing, that it is spirit or nature" (Ross, personal communication 2013). The organology becomes intertwined with perspectives and understandings outside straight facts and figures.

Our collaborative practice developed together through exploring interactions – the act of performance and realisation of the score demanding an intense immersion, questioning and reappraisal of our methods and expectations – and a progressive sense of internalisation, imagining and interpretation. The diagram below (Figure 13) details some of these interactions and dialogues aimed for by the initiation of this work.

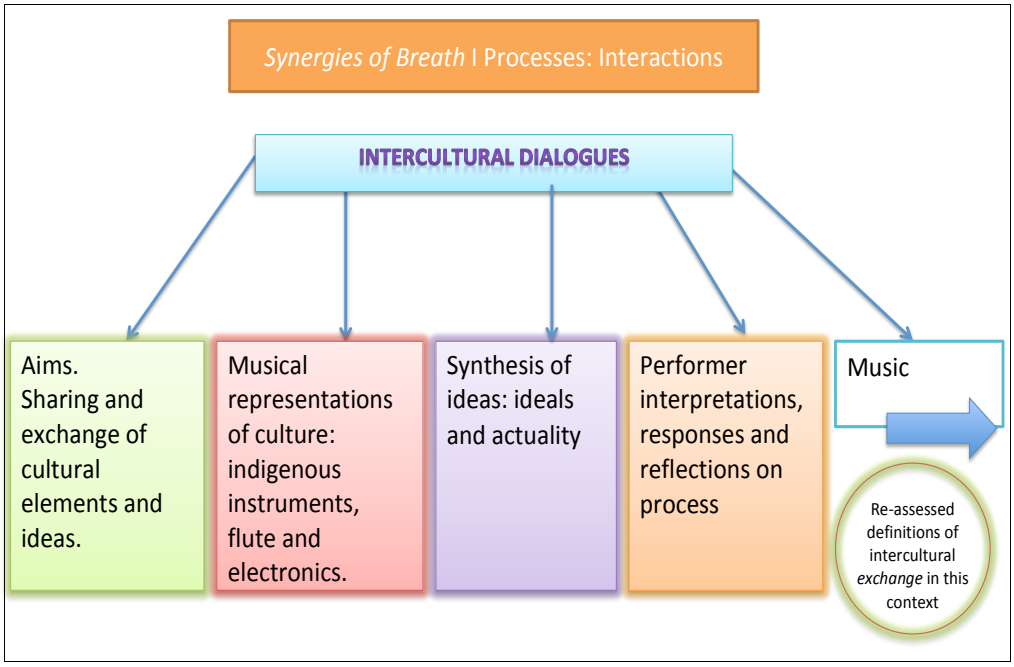


Figure 13. *Synergies of Breath I* Interactive Processes

The progression of musical and performative developments (see Figure 14 below) began with the fixed sound, the added flute motifs, the added sound

manipulations, and then the spatialization of the sounds in the performance space. This context for understanding proved to be rich, revealing both musical and cultural information to the research.

Initially the flute motifs are used to explore tonal colour (breath sounds of inhalation/exhalation, pitch bending, key clicks, etc) which later become elements in the dialogue with the fixed sound track. These tonal colours were further extended through applying various electronic effects to the live flute sound with the computer program *Plogue Bidule*. The integrity of the recorded sounds was retained and strongly evident to the listener and, from the performance of the flute with its acoustic and processed sounds intermingling and interacting with these, a whole new setting was created through fusion and dialogue of the multiple elements. The narrative of the work – a story about the Cameron Highland environmental changes and the search of the flute player for bamboo for his flute – sits behind the sonic explorations. We find the directness of some sounds surprising, but potentially expressive with inventive approaches to the sounds and movement of the piece.

Interplay between the parts was created as dialogue and reflection of multiple strands. With parameters initially defined, developing the DSP of live flute could proceed. It is a process of discussion, and trail and error. Using the software Plogue Bidule (www.plogue.com) a shell was created that allowed quick and easy experimentation with the sounds. Musical interactions revealed difficulties with sonic characteristics, the meaning of the spatialisation of sounds, integrating the lines into a whole, and adding a new dimension through the electronic sound manipulations that result in an integrated, satisfying musical work. In the early stages difficulty with technology occurred. The sounds on the fixed track were not conducive to pick up or melding with electronic functions and programs. The flute line was also restricted, and required re-setting to create effective presence of the sounds. Playing techniques were adapted, and were continually changing in the quest for aesthetically pleasing results.

The Western performance perception of self through sound, what Naomi Cumming refers to as the signification of the performer's presence in the sounds and 'presence' in performance as interpreted effect (Cumming 2000:160), was called into question as electronic alteration of those sounds and contexts occur. If embodiment of sound includes the motivation for musicians to *be* the music (Coessens, Crispin and

Douglas 2009:150), does a displaced, disembodied or treated sound displace the performer, create an altered reality, or new understandings of musical engagements? From the performer's perspective, there is a re-orientation in the space; reassessments of projection and tone colour occur, responses to the dialogues of spatialisation and interaction, and a turning in towards the instrument (Penny 2011:190).

Fusing these elements with conceptions of Malaysian music and thought became intertwined with the narrative accompanying this work. The Cameron Highlands story, where the environment is under threat from encroaching developments, land slides and loss of forest. The Semai people who live there carry on their lives regardless of 'progress'. The nose flute maker will walk for hours into the forest just to find the ever-receding supply of appropriate bamboo for the instrument; he will carry his good nature with him, and construct an instrument true to his tradition. He will play melodies from his own people's tradition – happy tunes, often wistful, always with a beautiful clear, direct tone that goes straight to the heart of the listeners. He will laugh as he finishes, shyly and modestly, but with a certainty of the power of his music.

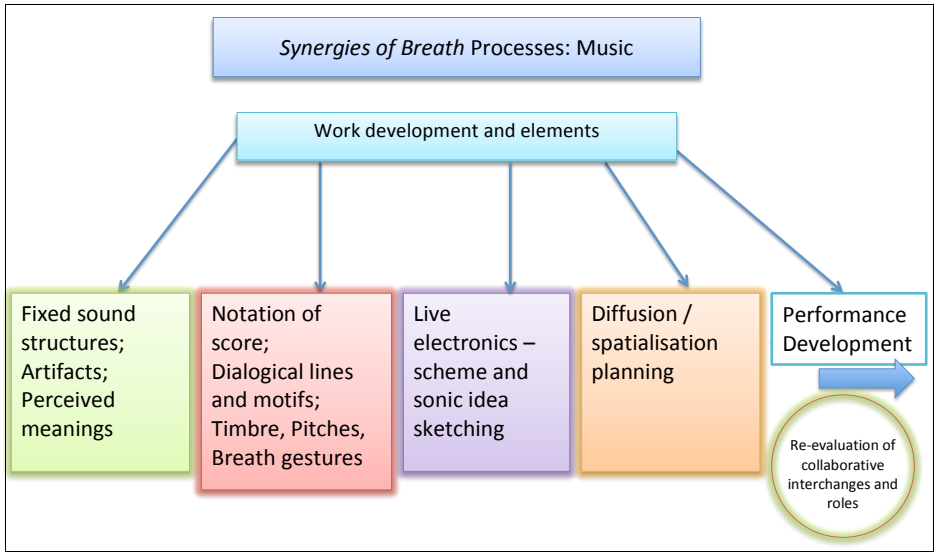


Figure 14. *Synergies of Breath I* Music Processes

5.4.1 Performance Construction

The initial rehearsal sessions were beset by problems with software interaction with the CD recording provided by the composer. Additionally, the difficulty of co-ordination of the parts through the memorization of sounds and placements in the sound scape proved to be debilitating and required re-construction. This was solved by moving to the *Plogue Bidule* platform.

The second rehearsal session was more successful, but still problematic. The integration of sounds and aesthetics were a major issue for us as musicians, and it was difficult to arrive at a stage for effective interpretation. Consequently we worked to develop the piece towards our aesthetic as much as possible through the electronics – to take more ownership of the sounds and structure of the performance. Technical difficulties were experienced, such as poor picking up of the live flute sounds – solved by using an extra microphone in the room.

Issues of intercultural connection arose, with us (musician/researchers) questioning just what this is and how is it occurring through this work? We had been presented with an artifact containing Malaysian sounds and music, and instructions to do with it whatever we wanted. We struggled with this concept of interaction, and felt that we were being asked to interact as a one way engagement. In order to succeed, at least partially, we decided to accept this for what it was, and we returned to considering the essences of the fixed composition: the attitudinal organology (for example, we had been told of symbolic birds in Semai playing), the feeling of a piece of wood before it is made into an instrument, the flute maker's use of the ear, intuition, understanding of "wood" and the spiritual/nature concepts of the indigenous people. Our own interpretations could be formed out of those ideas as we also experimented with the timbres, spatialisation of the sounds, and sense of dialogue that could be created in this way. The sonic environment was constructed through the "western" technological processes, which transformed the work and space, and became the setting for realisation of the musical aims of the performers. Our roles were thus expanded from performative to compositional in this collaborative arrangement, and the processes were reflective of a rather unique set of intercultural exchanges. A graphical representation of these performance processes is below (Figure 15).

The first performance of this work occurred on 16th March 2013. The audience overwhelmingly enjoyed the experience, and their responses to the musical material and effects were very positive (see evidence of this below).

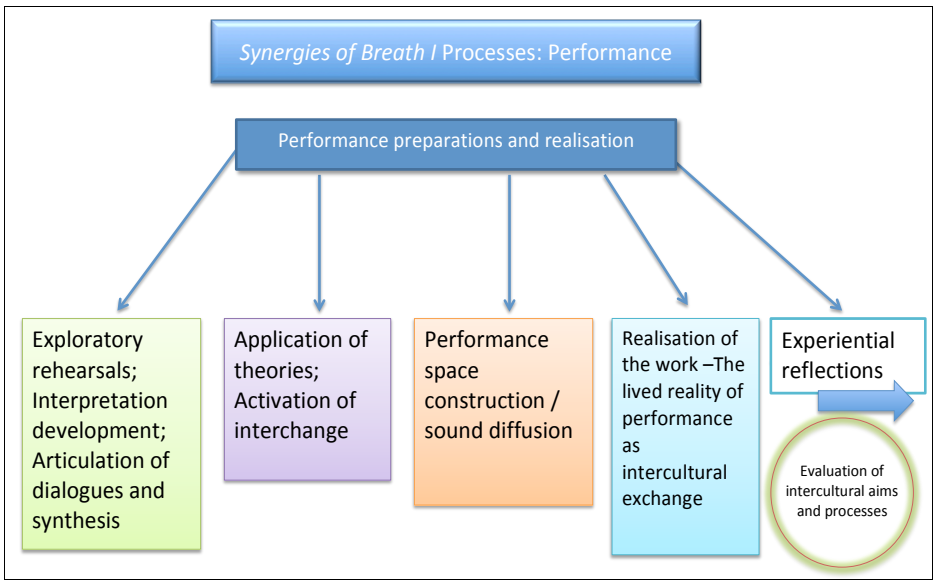


Figure 15. *Synergies of Breath I* Performance Processes

5.4.2 Audience responses

The first performance was attended by a group of students who responded in an overwhelmingly positive way to the whole event. These students were a mix of music and non-music majors at UPSI, and most of them had not heard any music like this before. They were amazed and pleased by the atmosphere, by the Malaysian sounds and by the sound technologies apparent in the performance. They were also very responsive to the sound of the Western flute, the timbral intensities of the instrument and the expressiveness they heard. It was clear from the responses that the elements of this music were appreciated by these students, and that new knowledge was communicated to them. They accepted the (for them) new style with enthusiasm and were able to respond from their hearts about the experience. Here are four excerpts from the responses:

When I heard this music, it feels scary music. The music like tells a story about someone lost in the jungle. And the jungle was full of danger and surprises that no one ever know it. But it still the best music that I have heard because it was a combination of quiet East and West music and culture. - Siti Aisyah Binti Mohd Syah

We were introduced to the new trend of music which was the ... combination of only flute and electronica sounds. Truth be told, it was alien to me but nevertheless, it was fantastic. When hear the music played, I was carried away to different dimension because the music had a very personal, unique and distinct aura about it. I can imaging myself in a deep forest, surrounded by trees and at the same time I can hear the overflowing river, the sound of water running through the rocks and the sound of the wind howling. Azreena Anak Ardy

This is my first time seeing an electronic performance live. It was interesting to see how live instruments can merge with the electronic sounds from the computer. I'm not very clear on how it works but I believe that timing and precision is necessary to pull off the performance well. The piece is entitled "Synergies of Breath" and I noted that there was this ethereal breathing sound in the piece. I'm not quite sure whether there was a clear melody in the piece, because it felt like a mixture of sounds which reminded me of the rainforest, especially with the echoing effects and the sound of the flute. It was also interesting to see the flute being used in different ways, such as tapping it to make a percussion sounds and blowing air into it to give out the sound of the wind. The use of the computer to add layers of sound into the piece also helped shape the mystical quality of the piece. Hannah Koh Pei Fern

After the choir it was now the most anticipated performance and that was Synergies of Breath for flute and electronics .... This song really touches my soul. When I listened to it, I feel like I was in an area full of greenery. This song causes my hair bristled. This song is very melodious and compelling .... I was very impressed when I saw and heard ...the flute because it was so soft blown. Ainaa Syafiqah Binti Abd Rahman

Figure 16. Dr Jean Penny, flute: World premier performance of *Synergies of Breath I* (Valerie Ross). FMSP, UPSI, 16 March 2013.

5.5 Two Improvisations for flute and electronics

Two improvisations were included in the project to further investigate Western and Malaysian cultural and musical intersections – in this case, music for flute, electronics and indigenous Malaysian pensol nose flute melodies. These structured improvisations explored an East/West synthesis through melody, live electronics and the body's centrality in performance, as physical gestures created the setting and motivation for new sounds, and performance rituals shifted through intercultural dialogue. Ingold observes: 'To improvise is to follow the ways of the world, as they unfold, rather than to connect up, in reverse, a series of points already traversed' (Ingold 2008: 17). The perspective of the Western instrumentalist in the Eastern context was expressed in these works as an unfolding of musical responses to questions of sonority, movement and location. Exploring multiple performative identities in a quest to unravel elements of cross-medial synthesis, creative connectivity and the interactions of the musician with technology extends here into an intercultural context through the study of current and traditional Malaysian music performance.

Studies of traditional nose flute playing centred around a performance we recorded in an Orang Asli village outside Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia in 2012

(see Figure 17). The invitation to attend this demonstration session as part of ethnographic studies being carried out in the field proved serendipitous, and inspired this phase of the research. The performance, which occurred on the verandah of a village house, demonstrated techniques (blowing and finger), tone colour, and melodic style and gesture. Numerous villagers gathered around to listen, and then talk. The expression on the villagers' faces during the music showed an immense pride and love of the playing – although, we were told, nose flute playing is a music skill that few, if any, of them now have. The nature of the performer – a very quiet, modest man who showed a great deal of happiness in sharing his music – was an important aspect of the occasion, giving us a strong impression of the place of music in the community. The music of this nose flute player lingers a long time in the air and memory. The sounds – pure, direct and strikingly expressive – formed traditional melodies that inspired our improvisations. An interpretation of the melodies formed the basis of the improvisations, elaborated and extended through extended flute techniques and electronic sound manipulation.

Figure 17. Nose flute player, Perak, Malaysia.

5.5.1 [seruling perak] an improvisation for alto flute, computer, live DSP and VMotion

The following section recounts the flautist's experience of developing the first improvisation through auto-ethnographic narrative. The descriptive qualities of the

writing serve to illuminate the self-observing and reflective performance journey. Ingold talks about the musical instrument 'corresponding with sound', the instrument as transducer, that 'converts ductus into material flux' (Ingold 2013: 128). He contends that musical instruments correspond with the sound in the way that materials correspond with the maker; that correspondence is a dialogue, carried forward through gestures and traces – a 'telling' that can occur through making. This analogy transfers into a music performance narrative, as the music becomes a way of thinking and telling. The telling, in this case, of imprints of mediations and linked understandings.

> An improvisation is beginning to form in my head. Still hearing the electronically treated sounds of the bonang and the serunai, as well as the traditional bamboo nose flute, I begin exploring my silver alto flute for sonic links and signs. The melodies of the nose flute player form easily (see example in Figure 18 below); motifs and gestures emerge and connect to create a structure and flow. If the improvisor responds to the moment and the composer works with patterns and structures (Knight 2011) this work sits in the middle, between notation and improvisation: a play with sounds, a building of predetermined structure, an interaction between performers (flautist and sound technologist), computer and camera all blurring the processes of pre-conceived notions of music creation. There is no score – but a graphic representation of ideas develops. We work to achieve a synonymity of sounds and ethos, reflective of the mood and tone of the indigenous flute. Indistinct air sounds, percussion in and on the flute, builds of harmonics and multiphonics combine to elaborate the sense of place and perception of nature. The camera picks up movement, the gestures of performance, to trigger different combinations of sound treatments through the computer. The sound technologist operates the software – Plogue Bidule with VST plug-ins – manipulating the sounds I produce with my flute during performance. We work together to create a soundscape and structure generated through the memories of sounds and colours of new Malaysian encounters.
>
> I start to think about interstices between the sounds of diverse flutes – similarities, differences and the implied and intuitive knowledge of performers. I think of the computer as creative cohort. I think of the moments of anticipation and freewheeling of previous improvisations. Will an inner logic unfold this time, an energetic complexity, an experience that expresses this East/West idea? Development of the piece heads towards the movement of sounds, the staticity and vibrance of the melodies, the waves of sound and gesture. Breathing perspectives are explored: the edge of breath, the edge of the flute, the inner

and outer merging of the sonic source. Tuning issues flicker across the brain, provoking small bends and microtonal textures and inflextions. Questions arise: Should the rituals of performance be questioned and modified in this context? Will physical gesture define the musical expression, or create a setting for the sound? Will the new sounds evoke a recognisable Malaysian aesthetic or feeling, or create a connection through context and exchange?

Establishing the sonic characteristics of the work and simultaneously introducing movement triggered effects created an environment of flux. Movement of the flute can be easily incorporated, as extensions of conventional emotionally and musically reflective movement. Entire body movements can produce a completely new sensation, quite foreign to art music performance conventions. Attempting to avoid any sense of dance, but still aiming for a smooth, almost imperceptible effect that may reflect the music, proved unsustainable. The effects would not pick up small, subtle movements, so substantial lunging and walking movements were called for. These movements are absolutely visible, they are attached to the sounds, they are integral to the whole work. Thus, an abandonment of ingrained cultural physical expectations was demanded.

I consider other ideas about intercultural music making. Are we achieving understanding of cultures, creating a meaningful exchange? To achieve artistic validity a commitment to understanding cultures, developing meaningful exchange, and creating the space for a reflective, emergent music is vital. Awareness of aesthetic and sonic implications requires balance and sensitivity, and in performance audacity and definition. These questions contest for my head space along side the beauty and drive of the sounds developing in the rehearsal studio. (Penny 2013)

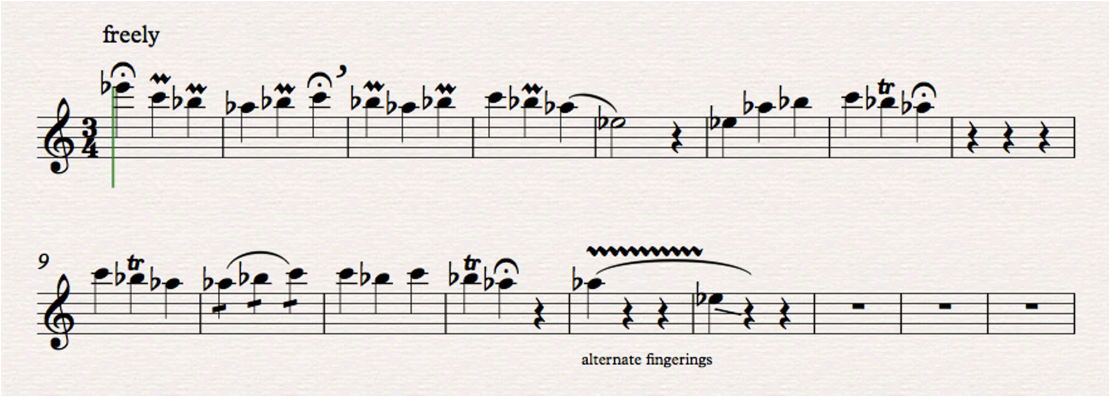


Figure 18. Pensol melody 1, transcribed Penny

5.5.2 Improvisation 2 for concert flute, computer and cyclops

Through a series of re-workings of the original improvisational structure, new sonic possibilities provided by different digital technologies in live performance were investigated. Changes adopted in this version included playing concert flute (not alto flute), using plugins from the *Cyclops* (not *VMotion*), a re-structure of the flute part, the addition of a second pensol melody and alterations in sound emphasis. *Cyclops* was placed within the *Plogue Bidule* shell to create a smoothly functional series of sound events. The fx included reverb, delay, harmonizations, spatialization, and pitch changing. Applied to the melodies, these were highly effective, but also indicated the need to work the flute lines into more powerful shapes and textures. An emphasis on multiple breath sounds was added to initiate a more defined focus on the perceived ethereal qualities of the music.

The *Cyclops* program captures live video from a *QuickTime* input source and outputs messages for analysed video frames for triggering any Max sound processes or to control patch parameters (http://cycling74.com/products/cyclops/). The interactivity through video capturing required grand gestures throughout to activate the triggering. A decision to include an additional pensol flute melody during the extended techniques section was made to add a new layer and perspective; to forward the indigenous flute references and extend the dialogue. The characterisation of the melodies, around which the whole work revolves, anchors the music in a beauty of tone, adding a highly realisable and recognisable dimension for listeners and players.

The incorporation of new sonic textures and melody led to an expansion of extended techniques use, and the development of a new construction to reflect the new emphases. A freedom of sound developed and the shaping of phrases and motifs anticipated digital transformations. Reverberation effects created an ease with the playing, a sense of open spaces, expansions and contractions of sounds and distance. Dialogues with new textures and sonic units activated by the effects created a setting for connection, for exploring the spirit of the music and reflecting on the generation of playing ideas and interpretative styles. The piece was ultimately constructed as follows, with flute line and electronic effects:

Perak nose flute melodies [*Crack Verb*]

Extended techniques (breath tone, jet whistles, flutter tonguing and closed rolls, tongue rams, flute percussion, exaggerated articulations, harmonics, whistle tones, multiphonics, alternate fingerings and trills) [*Not Subtle* & *Floating on the sea*]

Pensol melodies [Not Subtle & Floating on the sea]

Extended techniques [Not Subtle & Floating on the sea]

Perak melodies (contracted) [*Not Subtle* & *Floating on the sea*]

These structures and effects created a beautiful and subtle soundscape. The melodies carried and generated the sonic flow, and electronic effects added colours and voices that complimented and extended the flute line.

The influence of adding the additional pensol flute melody [Figure 19] was significant. Its tonal colour was easy to emulate on the concert flute, and the spirit of the music was additionally captured through the emphasis on ornamentation, the repetitive shapes of motifs and a feeling for the breathing techniques. These musical gestures caught a sense of the style projected in indigenous flute playing, mixed with a sense of the grandeur of expression derived from simplicity and directness. At times the music flickered, at other times it was sustained and resonant. A knowledge of pensol flute construction and performance (Penny et al 2013) enhanced this connection as the sounds transferred and became embodied in a new electroacoustic setting.

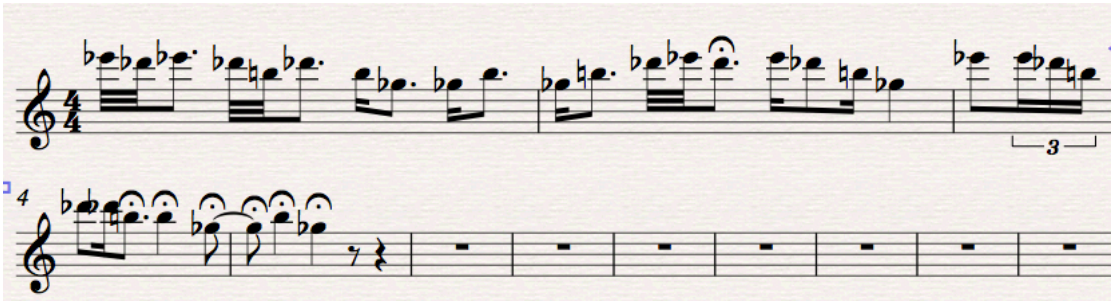


Figure 19. Pensol melody 2, transcribed Penny

Combining the two indigenous pensol flute melodies, contemporary Western extended flute techniques and the use of *Cyclops* as gestural capture sound manipulator established a fruitful mode for discovery. The technology, first and

foremost, amplifies sound and action. Movements are transformed into sound, micro-sounds are captured and recast into characters, and melodies are shaped and performed in anticipation of metamorphosis. The result is a freedom to explore, to develop timbral diversity and to mould sonic units into imaginative forms, capable of conveying an awareness, and perhaps a convergence of cultural dispositions.

The listener is drawn into an intimate sound world; expectations of sounds alter and new meanings and perceptions evolve as remodeled sounds enable explorations of unfamiliar ideas. The mix of cultural elements in this work was definitely unusual, and the result created a new way of thinking about and knowing these styles as conveyors of cultural information, and individual response.

5.5.3 Observations

Studying the organological properties of two diverse styles of flute proved to be a challenge of logistics and co-operation. Observation of nose-flute playing techniques through live performance and video performance was highly informative, and suggestive of lines of enquiry. Much of this interaction was intuitive, using our own past experience and knowledge to explore what new knowledge can be gained from listening to the sound, seeing the performance and learning about instrumental construction from a distance. This called up immediate issues of cultural exchange. For example, difficulty was experienced with procuring a nose-flute to personally examine performance techniques and gestures, indicating that, for Westerners, the knowledge can be somewhat closed and conjectural, and is inevitably based on secondary information and personal response to others.

The primary purpose of this improvisation was to explore new elements brought to musical practice through connecting with the sound of the Malaysian nose flute. Flautist and sound technologist collaborated to construct a work with elements of each, aiming not so much for a fusion of styles, as to comment on, and elaborate sonic memories transferred into a musical work that mixes up identities to create an unfamiliar aesthetic. Impressions of musical interchange emerged through melody, the sonic characteristics of extended flute techniques, an electronic sound environment and embodied understandings of the two distinct cultures. The knowledge of diverse traditions – our deep knowledge of Western art music, coupled with new knowledge of indigenous Malaysian music – both liberated and elevated the investigation. In an

artistic practice-led research setting such as this, self scrutiny also surfaces, as new gestures and meaning infiltrate both music and performance action – elements that may destabilize previous conventions and practice. An acceptance of difference is crucial.

CHAPTER 6: PHASE 3 – *Memento Memori: a Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists*

The third phase of the project emerged from the planning of this signature performance within the International Conference John Cage 101 held at the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts in September 2013. The conference celebrated the centenary (plus one year) of the birth of John Cage: in particular the inspirations Cage took from various Eastern cultures, and how this played out in his music and philosophy. The intention of *Memento Memori* was to create an evocation of Malaysia, its sounds, images and feelings, transcreating the score of Cage's Roaratorio, an Irish Circus on Finnegan's Wake. The researchers (who were also organizing the conference) were well aware of the personal history of two of the conference keynote speakers to John Cage, Dr Warren Burt[4] and Dr Catherine Schieve, and it was therefore only sensible to suggest that they be entrusted with the creation of the Malaysian version of Cage's *Roaratori*(see booklet information in appendices to this chapter). For The Imaginary Space Project, it also quickly became apparent that this musical creation and performance offered a wonderful research opportunity to investigate how the conference delegates – a knowledgeable mix of Malaysians, other academics from ASEAN nations, as well as from Australia, USA

[4] Burt knew Cage in America, and writes of this connection:
I first met John in the northern Spring of 1971, when, at the State University of New York at Albany, I was involved with the second production of Cage and Hiller's multi-media masterpiece HPSCHD. …Cage was a delightfully exacting task master. He knew exactly what he wanted, and in the gentlest, most smiling manner, he showed us how to get those results, adjusting loudspeaker positions, making sure all the systems were working properly, etc. … My next encounter with him was when I was a post-graduate student at the University of California, San Diego. My colleague Ronald Al Robboy and I were involved in musicological research involving some of Cage's earliest work. Cage and the Cunningham Company were performing in Berkeley, California, so Ron and I travelled up to the performance to interview him. He was most accommodating … My next lengthy encounter with him was at a festival at UCSD in the late 80s, when he, Nam June Paik, and Conlon Nancarrow were guest artists, and I was back in the US. I had extended conversations with him and Nancarrow at that point about various topics, such as the use of probability distributions (Cage) and various aspects of perception of polyrhythmic textures (Nancarrow). Finally, in the early 90s, I had dinner with Cage and Cunningham at their home in New York. Cage was setting some texts by Melbourne poet-composer Chris Mann, and seeing as how I had collaborated with Chris for almost 20 years, he felt he could ask me questions about the use of Australian slang-dialect in Mann's text. And from my part, I was at that point performing Cage's Mesostics as part of a sound poetry series around Australia, and I asked him to coach my performance of his demanding sound poetry works. It was an evening of jollity, great conversation, gourmet cooking (I especially remember the fiddlehead ferns in a tamari-miso sauce), and mutually useful artistic exchange. I looked forward to my next meeting with Cage and Cunningham, but before I could return to the US, Cage had passed away. [personal communication 31/10/2011]

and Europe – would receive this cultural mix of styles. Generous financial support for the preparation of the performance was provided through the Cultural Attaché at the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur.

> This score is a means for translating a book into a performance without actors, a performance which is both literary and musical or one or the other. The first blank space in the title is the title the work will take, i.e. *Roaratorio*. The second and third consist of an article and an adjective, i.e. an Irish. The last is the title of the original book from which the work as a whole was drawn, i.e. Finnegans Wake. In 1979, Cage made the first realization entitled Roaratorio: an Irish Circus on Finnegans Wake. In 1983 Merce Cunningham added choreography for the American premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York, October 26, 1983 (retrieved from http://johncage.org/pp/John-Cage-Work-Detail.cfm?work_ID=42).

6.1 Memento Memori: A Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists

The composer: Warren Burt. Warren Burt is a composer, performer, writer, instrument builder, video artist who lives and works in Melbourne. Born in the USA in 1949, he took part in the second performance of HPSCHD in 1971, at the University at Albany, NY, under the direction of John Cage and Lejaren Hiller. He currently teaches music history, composition and improvisation at Box Hill Institute, Melbourne. See www.warrenburt.com for more information about him and his work. Dr Burt came to Malaysia as keynote speaker to the International Conference John Cage 101 at UPSI in August 2012 and to present his composition, *Memento Memori*.

The artist: Catherine Schieve. Inter-media artist and composer Catherine Schieve has worked for 30 years in many artforms and on several continents. She grew up in Southwestern USA and spent much time rambling about the West Texas desert and the Rocky Mountains as a teenager and college student. She now resides in Daylesford, a spa town near Melbourne Australia. Her creative training is intensely experimental and exploratory; she developed a vision for creating musical scores as enormous, precisely articulated paintings which would be performed as works of theatre and has continued this sound-and-vision project, expanding her work into video art, installation, digital printmaking, photography, environmental sound, and a growing body of visual artworks. She holds an MFA in Multimedia, Video Art, and

Drawing from the University of Iowa, and a PhD in Music Composition from the University of California, San Diego.

Dr Schieve came to Malaysia in June 2013 to collect sound samples from the environment and take photographs of specific areas and items mentioned in the book, The Garden of Evening Mists. Additionally, Dr Schieve enthusiastically absorbed as much of the local cultures as she could within one hectic week of field work with Dr Andrew Blackburn. Dr Burt later incorporated the sounds they collected into the piece, and she collated the images into a video to be projected within the performance.

6.1.1Background

> Original: Roaratorio - *An Irish Circus on Finnegan's Wake* (1979) [A novel by James Joyce].
> Malaysian Version*: Memento Memori - A Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists* (2013) [A novel by Tan Twan Eng].

The original version was a collaboration between Cage and musicians including, John Cage, *voice*, Joe Heaney, *singer* , Seamus Ennis, *Uillean pipes* , Paddy Glackin, *fiddle* , Matt Malloy, *flute* , Peadher Mercier, Mell Mercier, *bodhran* , with 62 track tape. *Roaratorio* was a commission from the West German Radio and IRCAM for Cage to realize a work based on his favorite book, *Finnegans Wake* by James Joyce. Cage began by making a text from the original, and cataloging the many sounds and locations mentioned in the book. A recording of each sound was made at the noted locations - virtually every sound/location was recorded. These were then laid out in the sequence in which they are mentioned in the Wake and mixed, along with Cage's rendering of the text, into a massive collage of 62 tracks of tape lasting about an hour. In 1983, a revised version was completed for which the choreographer Merce Cunningham

The Malaysian version was a collaboration between Warren Burt (composer), Catherine Schieve (artist), and Andrew Blackburn (producer…). Musicians from the Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysia, and conference delegates (International Conference JOHN CAGE 101) performed the work under the leadership of Burt, who had worked with Cage in performances of several of his works.

The hermeneutical nature of the work (literally the theory of interpretation of a text) is inherent in the realization of the written instructions, which constitute the score. These intercultural hermeneutics became a prominent feature of the discussions that occurred during the development of *Memento Memoria, a Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists*. For both the creators, and especially the audience, as Dallmayr notes:

> … something has to happen, some work has to be done: the reader needs to discover the meaning of the text, a meaning which usually is far from self-evident. The difficulty of the work is increased in case of temporal or spatial distance: when the reader wishes to understand a text from another age or in a different language (Dallmayr, F. 2009. P.23).

This takes us to the philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer, who's theories have been referred to already in this study. Gadamer's assertion that hermeneutics is not a method for understanding but an attempt 'to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place' (Gadamer 1975: 263) justifies the apparent randomness and strangeness of the performance that ensued[5]. A survey, taken immediately following the performance of *Memento Memori* shows that a sense of narrative, which is common in literary novels was only evident for about 22% of the audience. However, in spite of not understanding the story's narrative, the response to the performance was overwhelmingly positive – perhaps summed up in the comment by this respondent who wrote "This composition has open my mind to think out of the box about music"(comment of anonymous survey respondent, August 2013). Difficulties understanding the story are magnified by the use of mesostics, which in Cage's own words, meant that the completed piece was "… incomplete to begin with… [however] one could work on the whole work from the beginning in such a way that from the moment the work began it was at all times and at anytime finished" (Cage 1979). As Burt points out, when discussing the process of creating the mesostics from 'The Garden of Evening Mists', their could be, and was, a surprising parallel in the emotional or dramatic moments of the book, and the mesostics that ensued.

[5] See Burt's reflection on Randomness in appendices to this chapter.

Here is one example of the mesostic extracted from Chapter 15, one of the most dramatic in the novel. One can see that even though the text is a random extraction from a found text, something of the drama of the original does come through in the extracted text:

sTains
sikH
mE
enGlish
recAlled
fRom
haD
hE
sleNder
fOrties
oF
thE
inVariably
askEd
questioN
dIscovered
beeN
chanGi
Malaya
In
hideyoShi
goT
hiS

palleT
tHough
hE
anGin
cAmps
moRe
Difficult
kEep
caN
yOu
For
mE
moVing
soundlEssly
carNage
hIdeyoshi
aNd
breathinG
froM

evenIng
guardS
flighT
Steps

To
Hanging
positionEd
tiGhtened
regAined
Rites
beaDs
twinEd
arouNd
Of
From
thE
paVilion
havE
beeN
delIghted
heroN
winGs
theM
echoIng
treeS
waTer
bird'S

> For this realization, I decided to just use words generated by the "spine text." The option exists to freely choose "wing words" on either side of the spine words, but for this version, I wanted to go for as stripped down a text as possible. Imagine my delight, then, when generating the text for this chapter, which deals with the execution of the war criminal General Hideyoshi, when the text "Hideyoshi got his" was generated. Also, in this chapter, the moment of the General's hanging is immediately followed by a scene of a heron flying over a lake. This is clearly reflected in the last occurrence of the "spine text" above, starting with "To Hanging PositionEd" and ending with "treeS waTer bird'S." (Burt, 2014:91)

An intrinsically intercultural aspect of the project was the introduction of chance, as determined through the I Ching. For both Cage, and Burt, the number of places listed in the novels they were working with, was impossibly large, and so similar I Ching operations used extensively by Cage in composition were used by Burt to select the places required for imaging, sound recording and reference through mesostics. Cage had a software version of the I Ching which he used from the 1970's,

and Burt recreated this software for his own computer system, and used it in the compositional process. For the researchers of The Imaginary Space, the whole process combining of Eastern and Western cultural, artistic content and practices was far too exciting an opportunity to overlook. The research questions which arose from the inclusion of *Memento Memoria: A Malaysian Circus on the Garden of Evening Mists* in this research project include:

Questions

1. What was the basis for including this performance in The Imaginary Space project?
2. What were the expectations for new understandings and /or exchange?
3. To what extent can Malaysian or western cultural influences be identified?
4. What was the role of technology in this performance?
5. How did the audience receive and demonstrate understanding of the piece?
6. Was the interculturality of the work apparent and did it provide any platform for new understandings?
7. How does our understanding of musical performance as a creative practice vary between the different global contexts? Can this question help understand this event within the Malaysian context?

These research questions are addressed in order, following which a number of conclusions will be articulated. Appendices at the end of the report contain the results of the survey, and other written material produced by the researchers and creators for the conference performance.

1. What was the basis for including this performance in The Imaginary Space project?

While being opportunistic, the intercultural combination of individuals, environments and content – Malaysian, American, Australian – involved in the creation and development of *Memento Memoria: A Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists* ensured that the types of questions being raised in the research

project fitted the research profile of this project very closely. In both preparation and performance the sense of cultures, the implicit following of the novel's narrative, images, sounds all combined in ways that gave rise to a kind of hermeneutical understanding of 'Malaysianess'. As Dallmayr observed "something has to happen, some work has to be done: … to discover the meaning of the text, a meaning which usually is far from self-evident" (Ibid p. 23). The composer, Warren Burt, took sounds recorded from the precise locations in the novel (outside the High Court Building in Kuala Lumpur, next to the hospital in Tanah Rata in the Cameron Highlands, on a tea plantation etc) and wove them into soundscapes which accompanied the reading of mesostics and performances of music also mentioned in the book. Accompanying this were images from these places, and live performance (traditional dance, modern dance, various instrumentalists – both Western and Malaysian – including the rebab and serunai) and the readers of the mesostics. The project broadens the modeling available to the overall research project and provides a dynamic example of the modeling described later as an 'intercultural hermeneutical circle'.

2. What were the expectations for new understandings and /or exchange?

We were drawn to the hermeneutical approaches of the philosopher and theorist Hans-Georg Gadamer and the conceptual understanding which he offers in his work *Truth and Method* (1961). As Paul Ramsay defines hermeneutics

> The hermeneutic approach involves the processes of appropriation, interpretation and understanding of meaning. Originally used to interpret and explain biblical texts, its use expanded to literary history and poetry and has now broken free of being solely a text centric interpretative device. Its use has also extended to so-called 'text analogues' that constitute forms of action including performance and other creative acts (Ramsay, 2005: 3).

The process of development – and indeed following Cage's score for *Circus On* – is a 'process of appropriation' (of text, music, images, contexts, and live music, readings and dance performances) that became a 'form of action including performance and other creative acts'. Our approach further allows a consideration of the intercultural context in which the work is set (1940's Malaya under Japanese occupation to 1990's Malaysia and the retirement from the Malaysian High Court of the principal character in the book). It forces a consideration of the impact of

historical and imaginary events described in the text, the interculturality of these, as well as the interpretations which were developed for *Memento Memoria*.

The importance of this hermeneutical circle is in understanding what all those

The Hermeneutic Circle as in *Memento Memoria: A Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists.*

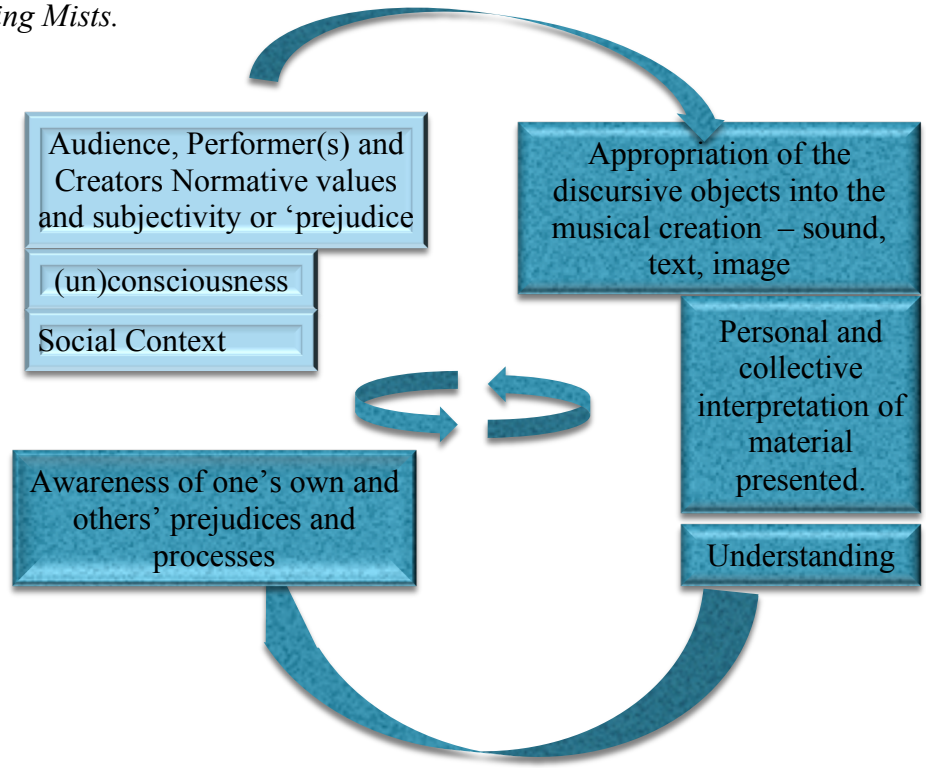


Figure 20. The hermeneutic circle based on Ramsay 2005

involved in the project – creators, performers, and audience - bring to the occasion. This is the 'normative value' and 'social context' that forms the prism through which one either receives or creates the work/performance. It is also evident that each member of the project could move into the circle at any point or stage. While the interpretation and understanding phases are dependent on the conditions and thought brought by the individual: they are dynamic and contextually driven, our prejudices and biases colour our perception of the social context of the work, and our understanding of the "other" 'normative values' that we encounter. By acknowledging and becoming aware of these prejudices we may mitigate their effect, but, as Ramsey asserts, we "…may never achieve total and 'pure uncoloured' understanding but by embracing the possibility of prejudice one can attempt to get closer than we otherwise would (Ramsey, 2005 p.6).

Viewing the performance through the lens of the hermeneutic circle also helps provide an answer to the eighth research question – Did this create any new knowledge about the nature of "exchange" / "interculturality?" While answered more extensively later in the chapter, it is already evident that *Memento Memori* created much information about how we exchange knowledge of our cultures and the intercultural knowledge which is embedded in such exchanges.

3. To what extent can Malaysian or western cultural influences be identified?

In the preparation of *Memento Memori*, Dr Catherine Schieve travelled to Malaysia to record, photograph and 'soak up' the atmosphere that permeated the original Tan Twan Eng text. The tea plantation and jungle atmospheres were vividly evoked in the novel, and Dr Schieve's intention was to understand this and record it – photographically, and through very specific sound location. Although some of the places were fictional – the tea plantation 'Majuba' or Aritomo's Japanese Garden for example – there are many tea plantations in the area around Tanah Rata, where this section of the novel is located.

A distinctly Western approach to the composition is the use of soundscape, and the Cagean approach to the creation of the music. Again while permeated with Eastern creative approaches, the outcome is equally Western in sound. There were obvious Malaysian references – sounds, instruments, dance and language, in addition to (or contrasted with) western instruments such as the flute, the piano, music of Chopin and more.

Attempting to guage the audience's reception of the piece, three questions relating to the East/West combination were included:

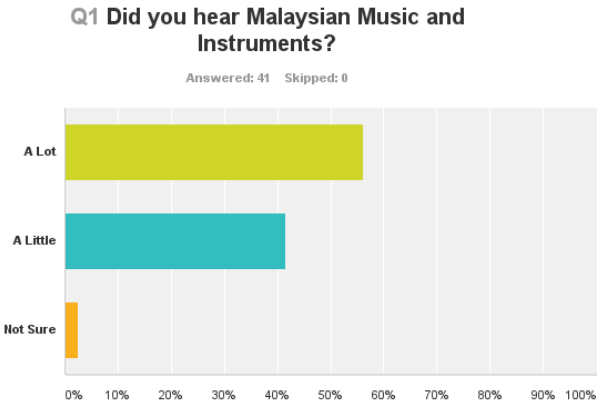
(1) Did you hear Malaysian music and instruments?

(2) Did you hear sounds from the Malaysian Environment?

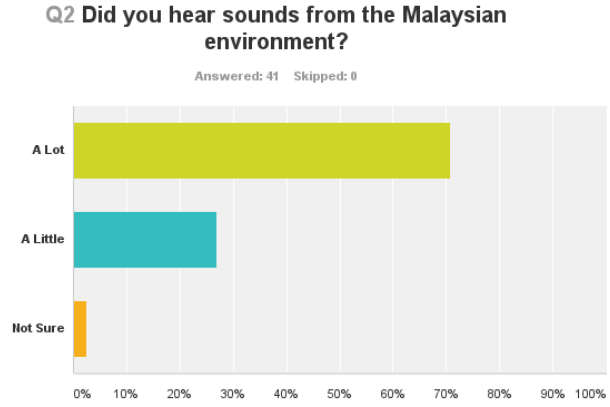
(3) Did you see or hear a mix of East and West elements?

A summary of the results of the audience responses is below

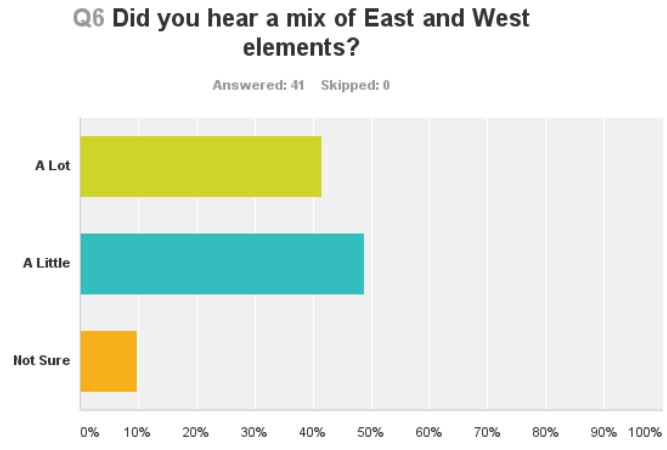
(i)


Q1 Did you hear Malaysian Music and Instruments?
Answered: 41 Skipped: 0
A Lot
A Little
Not Sure
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

(ii)


Q2 Did you hear sounds from the Malaysian environment?
Answered: 41 Skipped: 0
A Lot
A Little
Not Sure
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

(iii)


Q6 Did you hear a mix of East and West elements?
Answered: 41 Skipped: 0
A Lot
A Little
Not Sure
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

It is clearly evident from these responses that the combination of East and West music – specifically Malaysian, was perceived by a large majority of the audience respondents. The audience was very comfortable identifying Malaysian environmental and musical sounds that were present.

4. What was the role of technology in this performance?

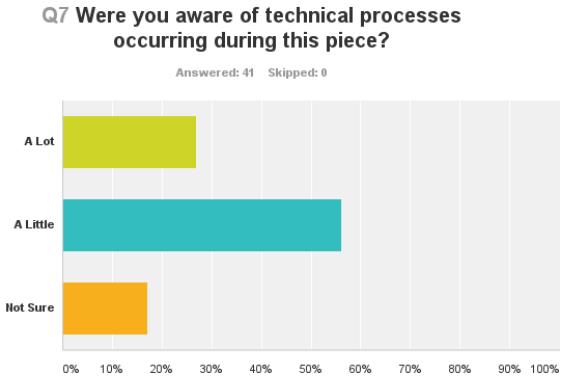
There are two aspects to the answer to this question. One is a statement of the role played by various technological processes in the development and performance of the piece. The second is the audience awareness of the technology during the performance.

The original *Roaratorio* performance is scored for speakers, instrumentalists, and a 62 channel tape system. So from the outset, electronic technology was central to the work. For *Memento Memori,* all the recording was digitally recorded, manipulated and assembled. Through collaboration between Dr Burt and Mr Azam, students from one of the technology composition classes of the Faculty of Music nd Performing Arts at UPSI also provided local environmental recordings which were then placed and mixed into the final performance. In the score of '*Circus On*, Cage gave precise instructions on the creation of the soundscape…

> Make a tape recording of the recital of the text using speech, song, chant, or *sprechstimme*, or a mixture or combination of these. Ascertain its time-length. Subtract that from a total program length, and distribute the thus determined silence between large parts and chapters of parts and at the beginning and end of the tape (Cage, J. (1979) *Circus On* Instruction 2).

A significant feature of the *Memento Memoria* performance was the inclusion of images and photographs from the locations around Malaysia from the novel. These were digital, then manipulated by Catherine Schieve and projected on large screens. So technology was apparent throughout the whole performance.

Whereas one may take a broad approach to technology, the authors suspect that the responses to the question below, probably refers to the use of dsp as a dominant audio effect during the soundscape. Again a significant majority of respondents were 'aware' of technological processes, though it is of some significance that the majority of respondents (nearly 60%) were only 'a little' aware of technical processing.



5. How did the audience receive and demonstrate understanding of the piece?

In the book *Understanding the Art of Sound Organization* (Landy, L. 2007) Landy asks by what criteria can a listener assess the reception of electronic music. Blackburn (2011) converts this into a matrix of questions and conditions of both sound and compositional parameters. [6] The matrix includes whether or not the following conditions are present or not:

Sound Quality

Dynamics

Spatialization

Pitch

Rhythm

A Homogeneity of Sounds

New sounds

Texture does not exceed for layers of sound simultaneously

Is the music programmatic/ narrative or anecdotal

Is the music acousmatic?

Other parameters not included above. (from Blackburn, 2011)

The choice of questions of the survey was driven by consideration of this matrix. The questions, and a summary of the responses, are given in Appendix 5. It is

[6] An example of the application this matrix to assess electroacoustic music may be found in Blackburn (2011) http://www.hutes.com.au/PipeOrgan/559/section-3/conclusion/key-characteristics-of-the-four-works/index.html [accessed 10/09/2012]

reasonable to argue that the response of the audience was positive to very positive. Although in comments (q. 14) some audience members observed that they felt they did not fully understand what was occurring at all times, nevertheless, they seemed to enjoy the overall presentation.

6. Was the interculturality of the work apparent and did it provide any platform for new understandings?

The interculturality of the work was evident in all the areas of creation and performance. Combining all the elements which made up the work, and for those who did not know the novel on which *Memento Memoria* is based, the disjointed and emotionally evocative effect of the mesostics would have seemed quite strange. For the Malaysian audience, this strange and seemingly random collection of words, was combined with a soundscape which would have been unfamiliar to all. At the same time the familiar local images, performance of traditional Malay instruments, and contemporary traditional dance would have highlighted the 'other.'

7. How does our understanding of musical performance as a creative practice vary between the different global contexts? Can this question help understand this event within the Malaysian context?

Some of the answers to this question are given substance from a survey of the audience that was taken at the conclusion of the performance. Relating this project to a Malaysian context, reflections by Jean Penny, provide a contextual understanding of Cage and his creative process in relation to East and West.

> American composer, John Cage was one of the first and most influential composers to explore East/West elements in experimental music. He had a deep and abiding interest in the East – in particular, Japan – and many of his artistic and philosophical ideas sprang from this. A synthesis of East/West cultural elements abounds in numerous Cage works, including Ryoanji for flute and percussion (version…) and in the many works that were inspired or constructed with reference to the Chinese I Ching. These influences can be seen in compositional approach, in timbre, in sensations of time, and in a freedom to alter one's perceptions of sound, and of music.

> Cage's scores and performance instructions reflect these ideas. In notation, for example, regular crotchet notes and rests notation may combine with microtonal gestures and curved lines that merely suggest pitches and durations, timbres and musical shapes … A focus on the staticity of sound, on sound over structure, assimilation of gesture, and sonic space can be seen; a sense of repose and meditation, of design and transformation of place; a representation of ritual through the Zen Buddhist practice of focussing down and inwards, to discover self-realisation or enlightenment. Cage's approach to time crosses cultural boundaries through a use of multiple temporal layers. Stasis and movement are portrayed as natural counterparts, and, in the listener and performer, time is stretched out and out. The performance space reflects this transformed sense of time, becoming a place for sonic discovery, a place where creativity and new thinking can occur and knowledge is interpreted. This synthesis of cultures, in Cage's case, initiates a melding of ideas and practices, whilst retaining the intrinsic values of both cultures. Cage's music gives us the opportunity to explore our inner selves, our sonic selves and the selves of others, and to create new understandings of both. (Penny, J, *Ryonaji* - International Conference CAGE 101 presentation).

In *Memento Memori*, these elements are not overt - but are implied through the performance instructions given by Cage. The original work began with an Irish setting; it is transferrable to any place. In Malaysia, we envisioned the performance as a rich tapestry of artefacts (both Malaysian and 'Western') drawn together by a new electroacoustic construction of sound and text. The images as well as the recorded sounds make reference to place (Malaysia); the text creates an aesthetic and imminence of people; and the production puts these elements into a time-based whole, presented for listeners to take what they will from it.

So, what do you hear? You hear snatches of speech, traffic, bells, doors banging, rain, frogs, birds – sounds from the Malaysian environment. These become a barrage of sound against which the narrator/s read the mesostic (A mesostic is when several horizontal lines of poetry are written, one on top of the other, and a word is spelled vertically through a strategic placement of letters. http://www.themodernword.com/joyce/music/cage_roaratorio.html). Traditional Malaysian instruments play (gambus, rebec, serunai); Western instruments play (flute, piano); and electronically treated and created sounds form unique combinations, spaces and constructions in an immensely complex polyphony.

The following processes documented by John Cage were re-newed and re-invented, but essentially followed in this new iteration:

> (excerpt)
> Having my doubts about our ability to accomplish all the work we had to do, and having decided to go ahead in spite of them, I needed to find a way to proceed without becoming frantic or nervous. I began to think of the Venus de Milo who had managed to get along so well down through the ages without arms. The de Milo situation in reverse: a work could be incomplete to begin with. One could work on the whole work from the beginning in such a way that from the moment the work began it was at all times and at anytime finished. This concept was specifically modified through conversation with John Fullemann about our work procedure. We would work on 16 track tapes. These are around 30 minutes in length. The horspiel would be an hour long. We had the Listing to realize and the places to realize (626 of them, the number of pages in Finnegans Wake, chosen from Mink's book by I-Ching chance operations), not to mention my reading of the mesostics and the circus of Irish music. I would do the reading and … it would be used as a ruler to determine the proper placing of all the other sounds …. The circus of traditional music would be independent. The remaining studio time would be divided into four periods so that all parts of the work, the first thirty minutes, the second thirty minutes, theListing, and the places, would receive equal attention. … In one day the recording of my reading was made and edited…. chapter by chapter. I listened to each before going on to the next. There are seventeen chapters in all. I was fortunate. Something carried me through. All the rest of the month we were obliged to listen over and over again to this tape because it was the ruler by means of which we were able to tell where each sound was to go. Somehow we were able to put up with it without losing our minds. The repetition of it took the place of musical theory … Though we didn't know what we were doing, that is, we didn't know what the result would be like, we knew what we had to do, the nature, that is, of the process we were involved in. In Zen Buddhism this is called purposeful purposelessness.
> I have written a score called _____ , __ , _____ Circus On _____,… (John Cage: On Having Received the Carl Sczuka Prize for Roaratorio; Speech given by John Cage at Donnaueschingen, October 20, 1979)

6.1.2 Conclusions

In a work that is as diverse as *Memento Memori,* the conclusions that may be drawn of the work are equally diverse. That the audience received the work as something that

was expressive to the large majority of them, suggests that one may say that the piece was successful in performance. The survey results further suggest that the intercultural qualities were understood and appreciated by a large proportion of the audience. Within the research parameters, the more enduring reflections about the creation and performance of *Memento Memori* are to be found in the processes that were used to develop the piece, and the incorporation of various semiotic artifacts – visible, aural and oral – into the work. The slides and images of Schieve which accompanied the work resonated with meaning for the (largely Malaysian) audience, who recognized the places and symbols – including around the High Courts in KL, plants and flowers, tea plantations, images from mosques – particularly a mosque in Tanjung Malim, temples and streetscapes. The soundscape of Burt also provided many familiar aural sounds including local wildlife, and sounds derived from the immediate locality around Tanjung Malim itself, where the performance took place. In the live music, traditional instruments – gamelan, rebab and serunai all featured quite prominently as did the Chinese erhu. These instruments all have a semiotic function in Malaysian culture – a fact explored in other phases of this project. So it may be surmised through the survey that the familiar and meaningful symbols anchored many of the audience who were inexperienced in contemporary art music performance. They provided a context for the rest of the (less familiar) components, which included the processed sounds, mesostics, and overall sense of 'crafted randomness' (see the extract from Burt's article in Appendix X).

The role played by technology in the performance was both a unifying element, as well as one the created a sense of "other". Bringing together all the elements described above could only be achieved in performance through the use of digital technology. Conversely, the sound manipulations that created the "strange sounds" referred to in the survey (see Q. 3) also are only possible through the digital domain. To this question, more than 90% of respondents were aware of 'strange sounds," meaning sounds of which they could not identify the original source (acousmatic). The dsp technology and soundscape also reveals the invisible in the sounds – making the intimate aural details evident and creating new layers of awareness. In this way, the performance space itself becomes a site of discovery – of new aural and visual cultural relationships

The performance of *Memento Memori* was the outcome of a substantial creative and broadly cultural process, and inherently intercultural. It is a validation in action of Bourriard's assertion that the space of the performance may be viewed as "art as life". For the performers and creators, the process of *Memento Memori* is also 'life/art in action', and a very successful phase in the overall research project.

CHAPTER 7: PHASE 4 – THE PIPE ORGAN

7.1 Introduction

The fourth phase of *The Imaginary Space* was the commissioning and performance of several pieces for pipe organ. The intention in this phase was to bring to the open the contrast of an instrument that is historically associated with Northern Europe (and especially with the cultures of nations that were colonial powers in Malaysia), Christianity and the church, with the Malaysian context of a Multi-Cultural, contemporary Islamic, post-colonial Asian country. The researchers were very keen to involve a Muslim composer – one who would be able to deal with the intercultural issues that are prominent in this phase. As with all the phases, in the reflection stage of the project, it was the theorists, such as Gadamer, Ingold, Bourriard, and especially Foucault who allowed us to make sense of what occurred and the works that were created. Discussion of this is held to the end of the chapter, after the environment and circumstances of the organ in Malaysia, and the two works are discussed.

7.2 The Pipe Organ in Malaysia

Pipe organs in Malaysia, by definition and association with their long history and symbolic significance in Western Culture, are fundamentally intercultural. During this study, the authors have observed a growth of interest by Malaysian composers of varied ethnicity to write new music for the pipe organ, and several works have been composed as components of this research project. Developing an intercultural understanding of both the instrument in Malaysia, and of Malaysian music now being composed for it, there is a need for a robust theoretical and philosophical perspective. The theorists Michel Foucault and Nicholas Bourriard each provide useful insights and perspectives, especially Foucault's theory of heterotopia, which can be effectively applied to this area. The brief discussion of Malaysian instruments, and the exemplar pieces which are discussed in this study are best viewed through the prism of an intercultural richness and spaciousness, explained by these Foucault and Bourriard ideas. It is through this prism that the Malaysian heritage of the pipe organ becomes culturally sustainable and relevant within what could be otherwise construed as operating in a hostile climate and cultural indifference. A recent restoration in Penang

at the Church of the Assumption (Morton & Moody Oakham, UK, II/P-12, 1914 restored 2013, Peter Wood, Harrogate, UK) has provided a Malaysian fillip and exemplar to communities who have such instruments in their remit. Though the Morton and Moody organ in the Church of the Assumption in Penang is a small instrument of just 12 stops, it has an artistic and musical integrity and heritage value which has proven worthy of retention.

Central to the arguments of both writers is the concept of heterotopia. Nicholas Bourriard, writing in the preface to Foucault's *Manet and the Object of Painting* recounts that Foucault developed the concept of "heterotopia" as a way of representing "a constant among all human groups, [and] can be described as 'anti-location'". It consists of an ensemble of "places outside of all places, even though they are at the same time localizable" (Bourriard in Foucault tr. Barr, M. 2009: 17). Foucault extends this, and it has parallels in contemporary Malaysia and its need to come together as a nation of many different backgrounds. The official policy statement states that what…

> … makes Malaysia unique is the diversity of our peoples. 1Malaysia's goal is to preserve and enhance this unity in diversity which has always been our strength and remains our best hope for the future. [7]

Bearing this in mind, and the combination of cultural influences observed in the organ works under discussion, some understanding of the heterotopian dynamic being encountered is offered in Foucault's writings where he speaks of "representations". Writing on the paintings of Magritte, *Ceci N'est Pas use Pipe* and the duality of meaning found in the images with text, and images shaped by text, Foucault wrote:

> It is not, in fact, a question of those calligrams that by turns bring into play the subordination of signs to form (a cloud of words and letters taking the shape they designate), then of form to sign (the figure dissecting itself into alphabetical elements). Nor is it any longer a question of those collages or reproductions that capture the cut out form of letters in fragments of objects; but rather the intersection within the same medium of representation by resemblance and or representation by signs. Which presupposes

[7] www.1malaysia.com.my accessed August 16, 2014.

> that they meet in quite another space than that of the painting (Foucault, M. tr. Harkness, J. 1983: 33-34)

7.2.1 Contemporary Malaysian Organ Music

One way to assess the vitality and living quality of any artistic movement, genre or instrument is by considering the strength of new creativities within the art form, and its ability to look outwards beyond its usual horizons. In the case of the pipe organ in Malaysia (as in the rest of the world), this is an area that gives rise to some optimism. Since 2011 a number of artistically interesting Malaysian works have been, and continue to be composed for the pipe organ. Compositions by Valerie Ross and Affendi b Ramli, provide representative examples of music of different styles being composed in Malaysia, and were commissioned specifically for this project. The works, Valerie Ross' *Synergies of Breath III: Rasa in Time* (2013) and Affendi Ramli's *Voice of Nur* (2013/4) are both "intercultural" and together they reflect the major cultural and religious groups in Malaysia today.

7.2.2 Valerie Ross Synergies of Breath III: Rasa in Time

For flute and pipe organ; first performed in Churchill College, Cambridge, UK October 2013 by flautist, Jean Penny and organist, Andrew Blackburn.

Synergies of Breath III: Rasa in Time (Ross 2013) is an outcome of this research study, and explores intercultural connections which can be found in contemporary art music using musical approaches of both Western and Malaysian cultures. Valerie Ross is well-known in Malaysia for her work as an academic, composer and ethnomusicologist. *Synergies of Breath III* combines the significant elements of her academic work – Malaysian ethnomusicology and composition. A companion piece, *Synergies of Breath I* (2013) for flute, fixed sound and live electronics is also related to the research project. This work takes a recording of a melody collected from an indigenous pensol (bamboo nose flute) within a tape part which also incorporates the sound of a jew's harp, weaving it with the sound of a (live) Western flute that is electronically processed real-time in performance. Having explored interaction between the Indigenous cultures (Orang Asli) and Western cultural spaces in *Synergies of Breath I and II*, in *Synergies of Breath III* Ross takes

cultural elements from the other significant cultures of Malaysia, including Hindu music and melodic fragments from chants of the early Christian Church, as her core material. Thus, her cultural explorations encompass significant historical and contemporary cultural minority influences in the ethnic make up of modern Malaysia. This composition is no piece of "magpie culture," taking ideas from various cultures. It is music written by a Malaysian composer, consciously incorporating music from the mixture of cultures that comprise the whole Malaysian ideal. Contrasting and mixing Hindu and Christian musical traditions and forms, Ross creates new musical combinations (The score is in the Appendices).

The score of *Synergies of Breath III* is unique. It provides all the core performance material, presented in a circular manner – representing the face of a clock – recalling and representing both the plainchant music of the hours of the Christian church and the Carnatic music from which the musical content and artistic aims of the piece originate (see Figure 21, Sections A, B, C, and D.). The score is a single A3 page. In the middle of the page is a circular section framed into 4 sections, representing a clock face (see Figure 21). The sections begin at 1 (AM and PM), 4 (AM and PM), 7 (AM and PM) and 10 (AM and PM). These form the basis of structured improvisations built from the material provided for both flute and organ within each three-hour block.

As a form of graphic notation, it asks questions of the performers while providing suggestions of possible answers, but leaving much to the imagination of the performers: how does this part for organ fit with that for flute? With the organ part notated as a series of short fragments, and the manual parts often being below the pedal part, it means that the usual reading tools are not going to work. Flautist and organist became very aware of the cultural spaces in which each was operating – with the flute playing the 'representations' (Foucault) of Carnatic chanting, and the organ playing 'representations' of Plainchant, the cultural contrast was very apparent. The 'representations' (in the Foucaultian sense) are both 'representation by resemblance and … representation by signs' (Foucault, M. 1983: 34). The 'representation by resemblance' has been noted above, and the 'representation by signs' is the notation itself (in all Foucault's writing, his reference is visual art and the various semiotic representations within specific works). Musical scores of 'stave and stick' notation are semiotically rich, and further enriched by the score layout the composer creates.

The graphic nature of the score further presents some practical difficulties in reading in a usual sense, however it also provides scope for personal creativity and expression from each player. The organ part consists of musical fragments, like little memories, which are reconstructed to make musical sense (below is a detail from the whole score of *Synergies of Breath III*). Within each time cell – three hours and performed as three minutes – the material can be performed in any order or combination during the relevant time frame. So, reading the score in the conventional way is not possible. Pedal parts are written above keyboard parts (normally below), and their visual alignment is not as it is to be performed. Timing the music – when each fragment is to be played – is also worked out in part in rehearsal and then in performance. Figure X shows the complete score, with the flute sections in their time frames (what Ross called "flute extensions").

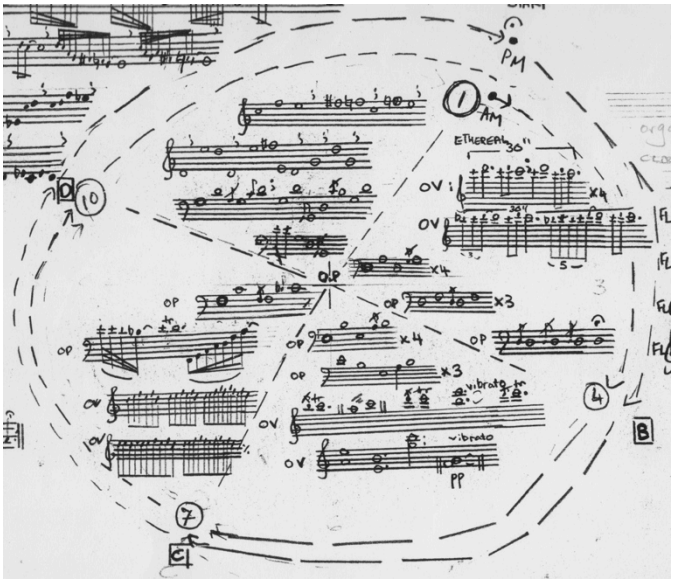


Figure 21. *Synergies of Breath III* Valerie Ross (2013) Detail of score, Organ Part

Synergies of Breath III: Rasa in Time – The Music. There are 4 sets of "Gregorian Tones" used for the organ parts (See Figures 22-25 below), which are paired to 8 "Hindustani Ragas" played and "extended" by the flute (see the list below).

List of modes and Ragas used simultaneously in *Synergies of Breath II* Ross.

Time frame (see fig. 3 above)	**Gregorian Modes (organ)**	**Hindustani Ragas (flute)**
A	Dorian	Malkauns Madhuvandi
B	Phrygian	Bhairav Kalyan
C	Lydian	Todi Durga
D	Mixolydian	Gaud Abhogi

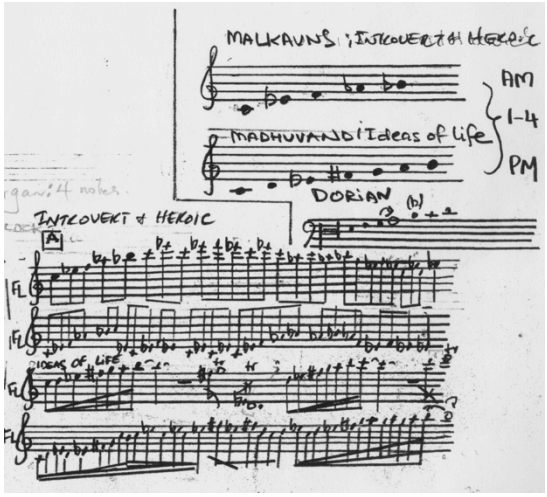


Figure 22. Section A - chants and "flute extensions'

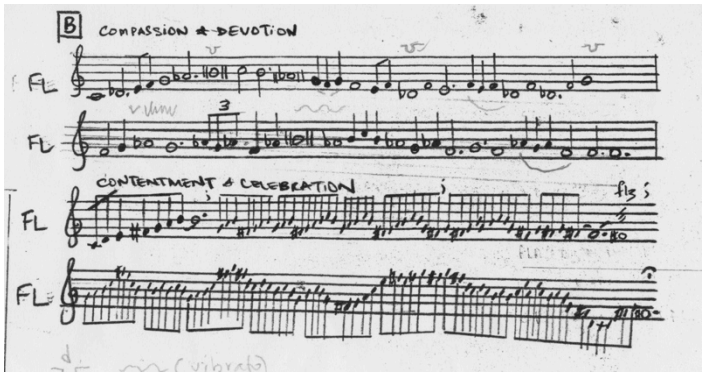


Figure 23. Section B- chants and "flute extensions'

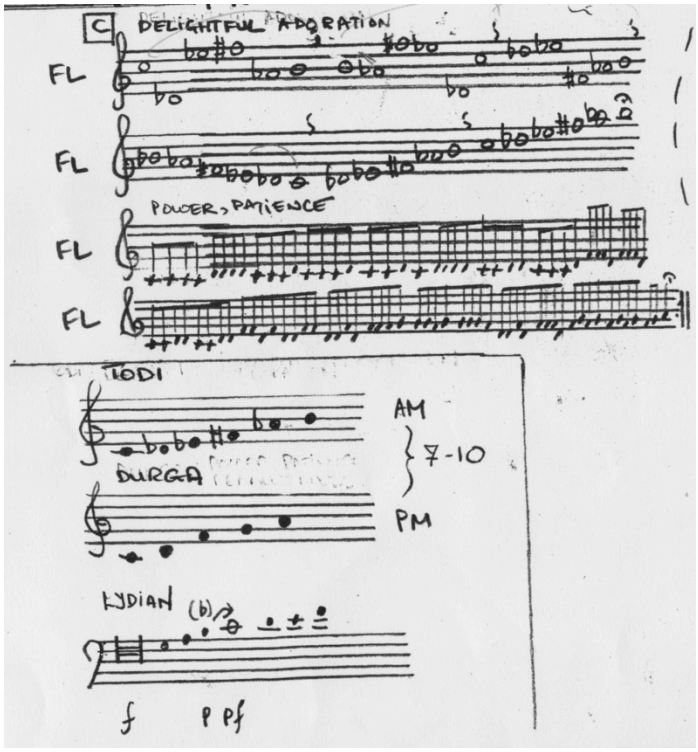


Figure 24. Section C- chants and "flute extensions'

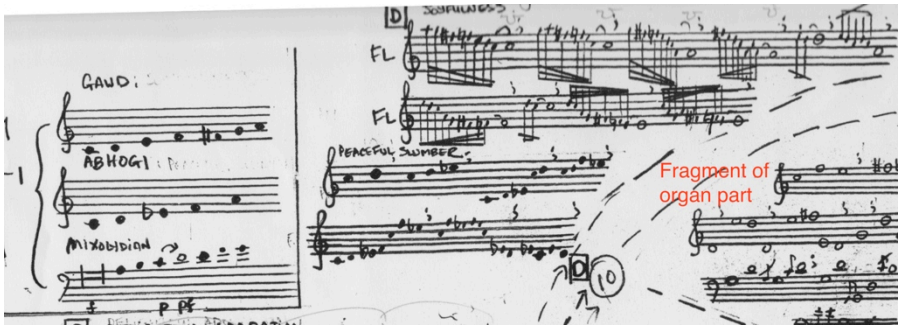


Figure 25. Section D- chants and "flute extensions'

Rehearsal Process and Performance.

The concept, development and rehearsal phases for *Synergies of Breath III* initially occurred in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (March/April 2013) and then Cambridge, UK (October 2013), the first performance being given in the Chapel at Churchill College, Cambridge. The concept and development phase discussions took place between Valerie Ross (composer), Jean Penny (flute) and Andrew Blackburn (organ) in Kuala Lumpur in early 2013, and the work was finalised in Cambridge at the end of the same year. Although the original concept of the piece was to include live DSP for both instruments, the composer eventually decided against this, composing an acoustic work.

In her two compositions, Ross is making specific and clear references to the history of Malaysia and the various diaspora that comprise it (personal communication, Oct 2013). Music of the cultural majority – Malay (Bumi Putra) is explored in the next piece under discussion in this chapter, *Voices of Nur* for pipe organ and live electronics by Affendi bin Ramli.

7.2.3 Affendi bin Ramli – Voices of Nur (2013/4) for pipe organ and real time DSP

In the Qu'ran, the meaning of "nur" is the light brought about by understanding the joy and happiness that comes from knowing God. In *Voices of Nur*, the musical intention is to share how Affendi – a Malay composer – presents himself in all his music – his "voice". It has "nur" and expresses a beautiful part of the Islamic religion, sharing together the "beautifulness of the Light of God" (personal communication, Affendi, August 28, 2014). He relates this to wider religious understandings of the Light of God, also seen in other religions – Buddhism, Christianity, and Hindi, the other major religions of Malaysia.

Voices of Nur – The Music. The music of *Voices of Nur* is tonal in orientation with simple melodic writing. It is set out on a conventional organ score of three staves (two for manuals plus pedal). The DSP processing is not indicated in any way within the score; it was intended to develop this element of the musical texture in the approach to the first performance. This parallels the compositional approach taken by Affendi in the development of the *musique-mixte* version of his *Curse of the Screaming Serunai (2007 rev 2012)* in which a flute part, with live DSP, was added to the fixed tape part in the 2012 revision.[8]

The Development and Rehearsal Process. Of greater interest than structural niceties, is determining the sections where the composer intends the use of DSP as a dominant timbral presence. In discussion, before rehearsal has commenced, Affendi suggests that DSP should be the dominant timbral quality in sections of block harmony (personal communication, May 2014) – i.e. sections B, B^1, C and D, with similar approaches in the repetitions of these sections. The rehearsal process is

[8] A full description of this process may be found at in an article by Jean Penny and Andrew Blackburn in Organised Sound, Blackburn and Penny (2014).

planned to occur using the pipe organ where the first performance is planned. Software choices were *Plogue Bidule*, or *ProTools* using Cycling 74 plugins and Camel Audio as the core of the DSP.

Voices of Nur – Analysis. The work is structured in 8 bar phrases, which are reminiscent of Affendi's commercial music writing background; it may also be described as a loose 16 bar song form. Although based around a typical Western musical structure, which demonstrate intercultural characteristics and relationships that are of interest to this research. These relate in part to the ethnicity of the composer.

The 8 bar phrase structure features an:

Introduction (B1-8) (B 1 - 8) f min
Bridge/Modulation (b 9) to d min (b9)
A (b10 - 17) New material - d minor
A^1 (18 - 25) repeat
B (26 - 33) New material – block chords
B^1 (34 - 41) Same as previous but more movement in manuals
B^2 (42 - 49) Melodic material – loosely an 'inversion' of B^1
B (50 - 57) Harmonically based on B^2
B^3 (58 - 65) Harmony of B^2 with new melodic material
C (66 - 73) New material (4 bars, repeated) – both rhythmic and melodic.
D (74 - 81) Bridge section – block semibreve chords and new harmonic pattern
$B^{1.1}$ (82 - 89) Key transposed up 1 tone (E major/minor)
$B^{1.1}$ (90 - 101) Repeated
Coda (102 - 106).

If read as "song form", the structure would be B 1 - 9 Introduction, B10 - 25 "verse", B26 - 41 "chorus", B 42 - 57 "chorus", B66 - 81 Bridge, B 82 - 101 "chorus" B102 - 106 - Coda.

These two works, one complete and publicly performed and the other through the final stages of preparation, represent an exciting development for Malaysian pipe organ music. The composers taking part in this project were enthusiastic in their response, and keen to explore the challenge posed by creating a work which is

Malaysian, as each composer understands the meaning, and the musical interaction with Western music represented by the pipe organ itself.

7.2.4.The Pipe Organ – Interculturality and Heterotopia

The process of developing the two pipe organ works, one to performance and the other to an advanced state of compositional development ready for the performance rehearsal process to commence, has raised many intercultural issues. The application of philosophical and theoretical tenets of late twentieth century theorists, Michel Foucault and Nicholas Bourriard, provide some explanations, models and ways of approaching the inherent interculturality of pipe organs in Malaysia. Before considering the theories of these writers, and the argument that follows, some definitions assist in positing the argument within a theoretical framework.

In both organ works, the musical representations are different from the usual cultural norms for this instrument. The musical combination of cultural elements and "representations" – Western/Malaysian, Christian/Islamic/Hindu in this musical context ensure that the cultural elements "…meet in quite another space" (Foucault, op.cit.) beyond that of the music. In the works, musical and cultural references are representative, not literal musical quotation, relying on the performers, and receivers (audience) to understand the connection between cultures that this creates. In *Synergies of Breath III: Rasa in Time* and *Voices of Nur,* Carnatic Music, Gregorian Chant and Islamic Music are referred to, rather than directly quoted. These musical traditions are consciously referenced by the composer, but without direct quotation of any religious chant or music. Nevertheless, familiarity with the original allows the listener to "…posit an equivalence between the fact of resemblance and the affirmation of a representative bond" (Foucault, 1983: 34). Using musical quotation and reference is already common in the organ music of the Western tradition. One example may be seen in the organ music of Jean Langlais, where there are frequent and direct quotations of French Gregorian Plainsong chant taken from the various Propers of the Day.[9] A single example, from the many possibilities in Langlais'

[9] The following explanation of Gregorian Chant is from the website of GIA Publications – a specialist publisher of Liturgical Chant.

works, will serve to illustrate this point. The *Cinq Méditations sur l'apocalypse* (Langlais, 1973), the second movement "Il était, il est, et il viendra" (He was, He is, and He will become), incorporates two chants – "Vexilla Regis" from Vespers for the First Sunday of the Passion, and "Lauda Sion"(Laubounsky, 2000: 279). In this music, the references are specific and direct, and for their church audience, whom Langlais presumed were liturgically literate, they add a depth of meaning and significance to the music in which they are quoted.

In *Synergies of Breath III*, Ross uses musical gestures to infer the musical content and ideas. In the original sketches of the flute part (see Figure X below) the actual notes and breath-tones are not quotations of any chant, but shapes and gestures based on the "ideas of the carnatic music chanting" which are represented in this music. Similarly with the organ part (see Figure X above) – the music implies the music of the chants and the idea of the organ as an instrument associated with the church and, by implication, chant. Further, the (semi-improvisational) organ part is gestural in nature and is intended to create the idea of chanting. The circular shape of the score (see Figure X above) encourages the sense of gesturality as a major musical component, as the stave and stick notation which is used is not read vertically as in other music. Rather, the player takes the musical gestures, relates them to the musical gestures of the flute part, and shapes an organ part from the available material.

The music of the chants of the Services of the Hours are not played exactly – rather the notes being played are a representation of the chants, not the literal quotation. Again, with a substantially improvised quality to the music and its notation,

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> Gregorian chant is the church's own music, born in the church's liturgy. Its texts are almost entirely scriptural, coming for the most part from the Psalter. For centuries it was sung as pure melody, in unison, and without accompaniment, and this is still the best way to sing chant if possible. It was composed entirely in Latin; and because its melodies are so closely tied to Latin accents and word meanings, it is best to sing it in Latin. (Among possible exceptions are chant hymns, since the melodies are formulaic and are not intrinsically tied to the Latin text.) Gregorian chant is in free rhythm, without meter or time signature. Because the liturgy was sung almost entirely in Gregorian chant in the Middle Ages (with polyphony saved for special occasions), every type of liturgical text has been set in chant: readings, prayers, dialogs, Mass propers, Mass ordinaries, office hymns, office psalms and antiphons, responsories, and versicles. Although Pope St. Gregory the Great (590–604) certainly did not play a role in the creation or compilation of our chant melodies, popular legend led the church to name Gregorian chant after this great leader.
>
> Many other types and styles of music are similar to Gregorian chant or inspired by it, but one should distinguish them from Gregorian chant. Taizé chants, for example, are generally in Latin, similar to Gregorian chant antiphons. But the musical style is quite different: metered and with choral harmonies and/or instrumental accompaniments. (http://www.giamusic.com/sacred_music/chant_what_is.cfm accessed 09 Oct 2014)

representation, not quotation, is important. Of greater significance in this instance is not that the notes of the score do not make direct quote from the chants, but its signification, and the new relationships forged in the process of their juxtaposition. To quote again from Foucault discussing the work or Magritte:

> Let a figure resemble an object…and that alone is enough for there to slip into the pure play… a statement–obvious, banal, repeated a thousand times yet almost always silent… "what you see [hear] is that". No matter, again in what sense the representative relation is posed – whether the painting is referred to the visible world around it, or whether it independently establishes an invisible world that resembles itself. The essential point is that semblance and affirmation cannot be associated (Foucault, 1983: 34).

There is no obvious connection between the disparate "objects" or traditions of these works. In *Synergies of Breath III,* we must connect the pipe organ, Indian Carnatic Chant, Western Gregorian Chant, improvisation with elements of time and space, all together; or in *Voices of Nur* the pipe organ and Islamic musical aesthetics with popular music forms and structures. The following statement of Magritte, cited by Foucault, allows us to create this connection within the heterotopian space for it is "conveying no contradiction, but referring to the inextricable tangle of words and images and to the absence of a common ground to sustain them". [Magritte says] "In a painting, words are of the same cloth as images. Rather one sees images and words differently in a painting" (Foucault, 1983: 39).

Having established that the music of these works draws seemingly unrelated influences and symbols together to create a new set of relationships and resemblances, exploring the space in which this occurs is an imperative. Kadijah White notes that the term "… soundscape" is used to examine people's negotiation of sound and noise within a space and … displace the primacy of visual symbols within the physical landscape and emphasise the significance of aural markers" (Goddard, Halligan and Hegarty, 2012: 234). In this world, sound (what White terms "noise") comprises both a physical and spatial context, which transfers to a psychological domain as well. Thus sound can become a "physically confining space", a type of prison from which people may have no opportunity to escape (p.239). Though these examples are negative, they illustrate the physically spatial impact of sound. As White tellingly

argues, sound can here trouble the boundaries between adjacent communities. Citing Baron, (1970):

> Noise pollution is what we suffer from when we sit on the rocks looking out to sea enjoying the sense of the wind and the waves, but not enjoying at all the blast of soul music from the transistor radio on nearby table (p.241).

Yet we find in the music of Ross and Ramli a non-physical space in which the different cultural (musical) symbols and the interactions (relationships) which take place can reside simultaneously, positively informing and affirming each other.

7.2.5 Conclusions

In Malaysia, the presence of the pipe organ is inherently intercultural. It is a physical manifestation of a heterotopic state that can be understood by the participants and recipients (audience) in a musical performance. Each of the compositions under discussion here exhibit the use of multiple cultural influences, and their use of advanced Western Modern or Post-Modern musical aesthetics, including live DSP of the organ, and other instrumental resources.

Drawing these points together is given explanation and (intercultural) justification through the theoretical writings of Foucault and Bourriard using Foucault's theory of "heterotopia". It is, according to Foucault, a constant among all groups and is defined as 'anti-location'– "an ensemble of places outside of all places, even though they are at the same time effectively localizable" (Foucault, 2009: 17). Importantly, as Gary Saur-Thompson observes "…we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another" (ibid). So the diverse cultural signs that are drawn together in these works each continue to exist on their own and, whilst in close proximity to others, neither impose themselves nor are reduced, but interact in ways that create new relationships and meanings. What the practitioners have found, regarding this facet is that the individual cultural artifacts, or resemblances, interact in an (invisible) space, perhaps mediated electronically if DSP is involved.

In musical creation, heterotopia allows the cogent blend of music of varying and diverse cultural origin. Most importantly, it allows these disparate styles to coexist alongside one another, and 'meet in quite another space' (Foucault), in addition to

meeting within the musical context. In addition to the two musical compositions that are tangible artifacts, understanding and perceiving the heterotopic space is one of the clearest outcomes of this phase of *The Imaginary Space.*

CHAPTER 8: PHASE 5 – MODEL DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this phase was to develop models from knowledge emerging from this project. Main concepts of processes, of interactions, of connections and performance have been identified, described, and graphically summarized. The models show ways of activating intercultural explorations, present descriptions of experience, and models of dialogues that shape the intertwined capacities for response to and for engagement with meaning. Graphic representations help to express non-verbal communications, emotion and non-verbal interactive signals, and these aim to clarify the concepts of each model. Of primary importance are the representations of the works and performances as spaces and models of and for intercultural exchange. The six models identified for inclusion here are:

1. Interculturality – Compositions and Collaborations
2. Interculturality – Performances
3. Interculturality – Technology
4. The Intercultural Hermeneutic Circle – Processes of Understanding
5. Heterotopia: The Imaginary Space

8.1 Models

8.1.1 Interculturality – Compositions and Collaborations

Based on Cloonan et al (2005) (see Chapter 1 above), investigations of intercultural activity can be defined through processes for developing knowledge of our selves, of others, and of dialogical interaction. Applied to compositions and collaborations in this project, it involved developing a context for understanding through learning about Malaysian cultures, about Western theoretical and philosophical ideas, about the context of cultures in the world, and past and current international connectivities in music. This knowledge informed the creation of compositions and allowed for a certain level of dialogue and interaction between participants. The knowledge was represented in the new music artifacts and realized in performances of each work.

CLOONAN, et al Principles of Interculturality	THE IMAGINARY SPACE
Knowing own culture	Knowing own culture and music practices (Western)
Knowing other culture	Knowing other culture and music practices (Malaysian)
Establishing and maintaining dialogue and interaction	Developing and activating theories of dialogue and interaction
Generating new knowledge	Generating new music and performances as a setting for exchange

8.1.2 Interculturality – Performance

Performances generate cultural knowledge transferal through embedded gestural and sonic means, both acoustic and electroacoustic. Synthesis of musical elements is activated by performers as physical energy and personal responses to sonic artifacts, including intuitive judgements of timbres and sound movement, and real-time interpretation of the symbiosis of cultures within the performance space. Knowledge from perception, cognition, emotion and gesture is unified and synthesised through the performance and activation of imagination. Cultural collaborations are thus played out in performance as works became spaces for experiencing exchange by the performers and audience. Two graphic representations are presented here: an overview of performative processes, and performance space and zones of interaction: the context for understanding.

(1) Overview of performative processes.

This model shows the processes of interculturality in performance: ‘knowing’ one’s own culture (artifacts, processes, practices); ‘knowing’ the other culture (artifacts, processes, practices); and synthesizing practices and knowledge to create

new forms and layers of meaning and connection that are disseminated through realisation, shared experience and context.

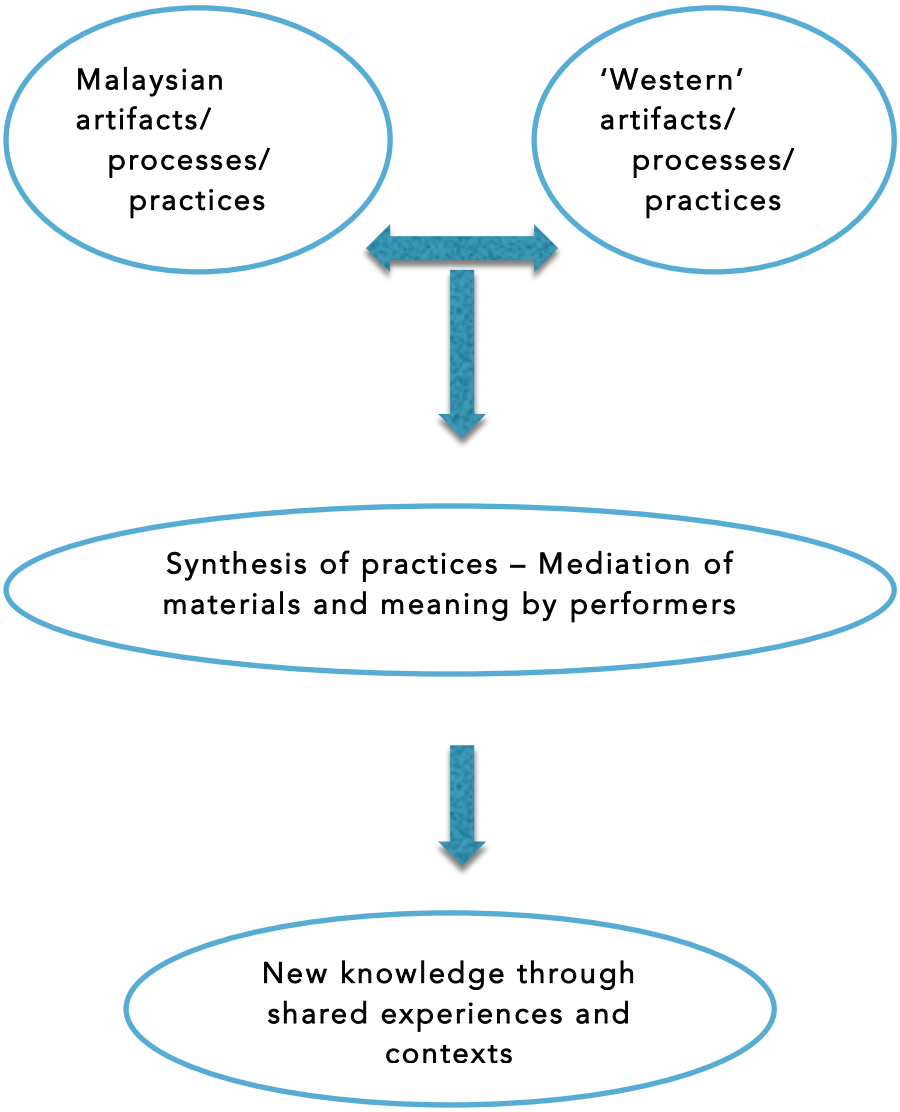

Figure 26. Overview of processes

(2) Performance space and zones of interaction: the context for understanding.

This model shows the interactive zones of the performance space – the interface of instrumental performance, electronics and audience, and the construction of a context for understanding. The performance space is a "malleable and adjustable force, subject to imagination and electricity, and new relationships with audiences result as diffusion, sound and performer location, components of sounds, the physicality of performance, the visible and invisible elements create different experience." (Penny, 2009: 182). This is where the meta-instrument materializes: the evolving organism merging performers, instruments, equipment and space with a transformed sound environment – the physical space of engagement.

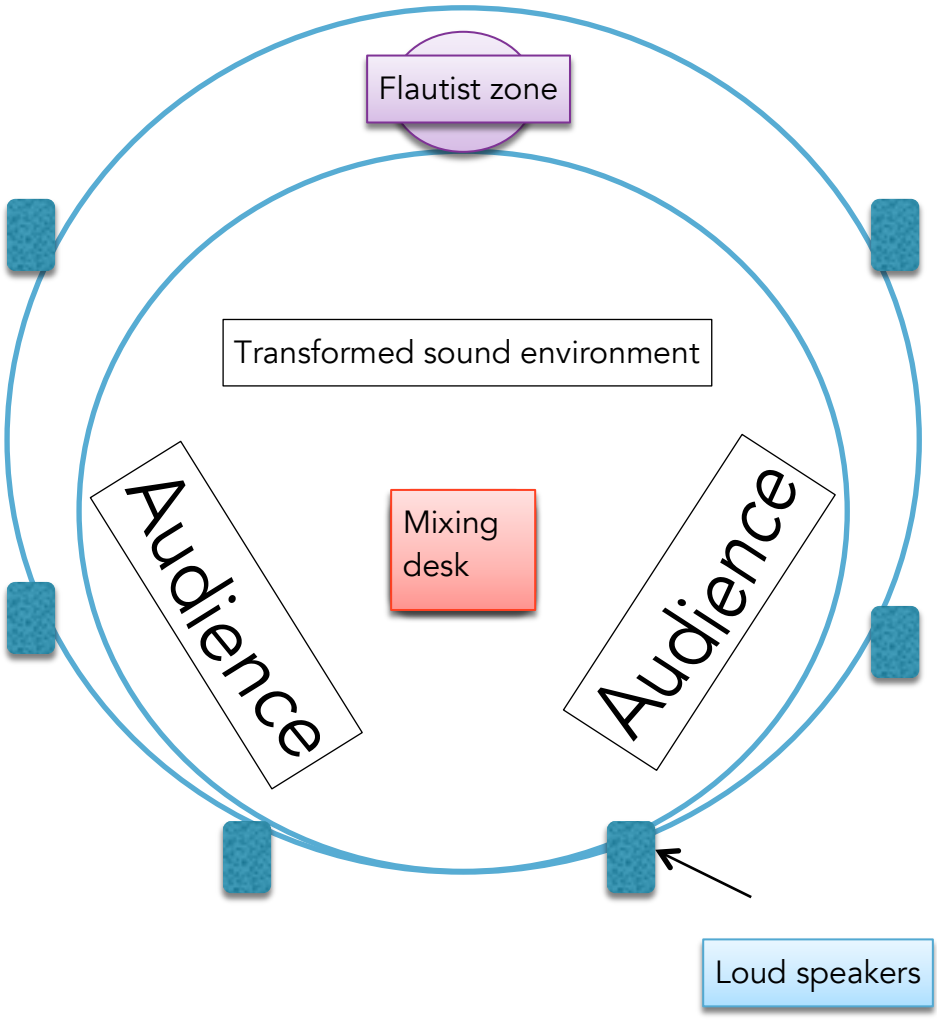

Figure 27. The performance space and zones of interaction.

8.1.3 Interculturality – Technology

The role of technology as a mediator of the performance space is central to this research. Creating a sonic environment through digital signal processing (sound manipulations including timbre, volume, sound location and spatialisation) provides a context for investigation of intercultural parameters and the potential for creative exchange. The technology can give the performers a means for comment, and response to the event (processes and presentation), as well as implementing a musical role of layering sounds and meaning. The capacity of electronic techniques to shift perceptions of sonorities, location, spatial dynamics and characters of the music may also challenge expectations and responses (Penny 2011). This disruption to the 'norm' provokes and engenders the development of shifts in understandings and the acquisition of new knowledge.

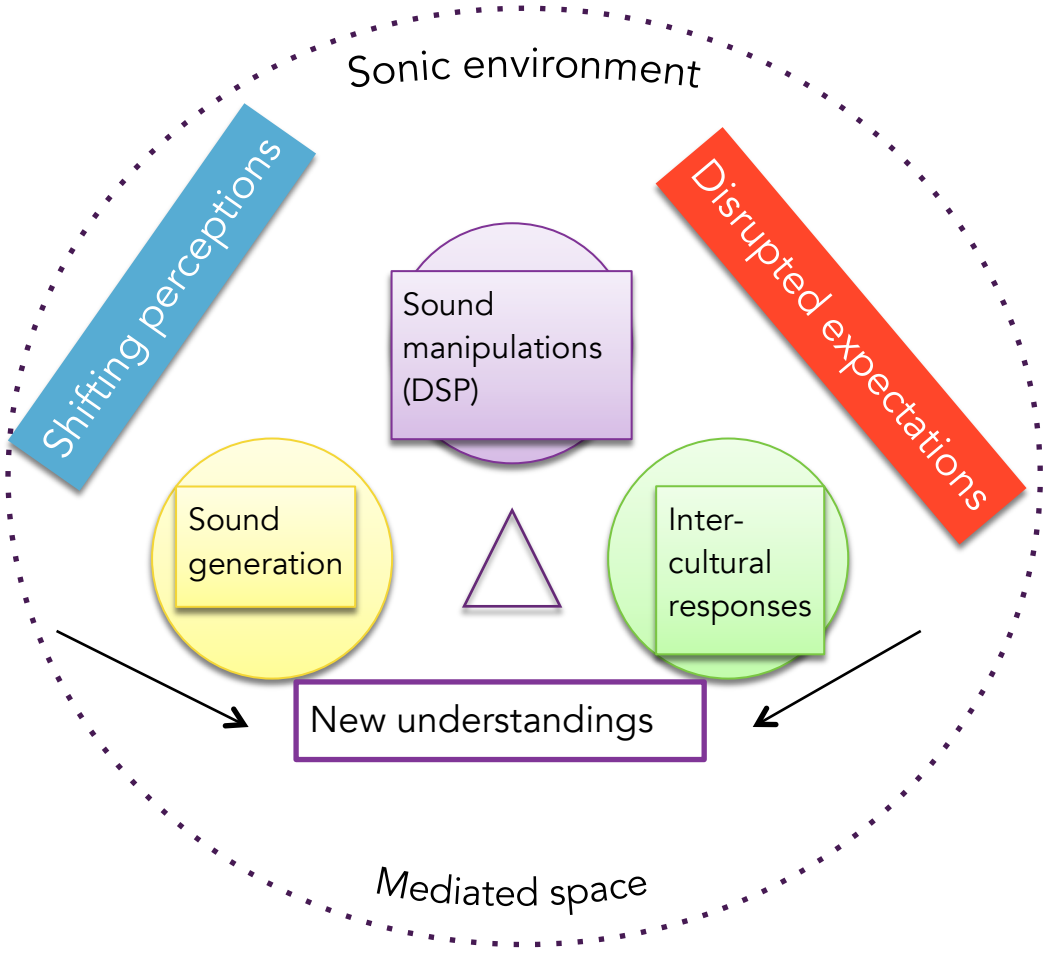

Figure 28. The mediated space

8.1.4 The Intercultural Hermeneutic Circle – Processes of Understanding

The Hermeneutic Circle provides a process for understanding that reveals structures and cultural meanings. The importance of this hermeneutical circle is in understanding what all those involved in the project – creators, performers, researchers and audience – bring to the occasion. This is the 'normative value' and 'social context' that forms the prism through which one either receives or creates the work/performance. It is also evident that each member of the project could move into the circle at any point or stage. While the interpretation and understanding phases are dependent on the conditions and thought brought by the individual: they are dynamic and contextually driven, our prejudices and biases colour our perception of the social context of the work, and our understanding of the "other" 'normative values' that we encounter. By acknowledging and becoming aware of these prejudices we may mitigate their effect, but, as Ramsey asserts, we "...may never achieve total and 'pure uncoloured' understanding but by embracing the possibility of prejudice one can attempt to get closer than we otherwise would" (Ramsey, 2005: 6). Viewing performances through the lens of the hermeneutic circle helps to articulate the processes of understandings, and information about the engagements of exchange and interculturality embedded in the performance.

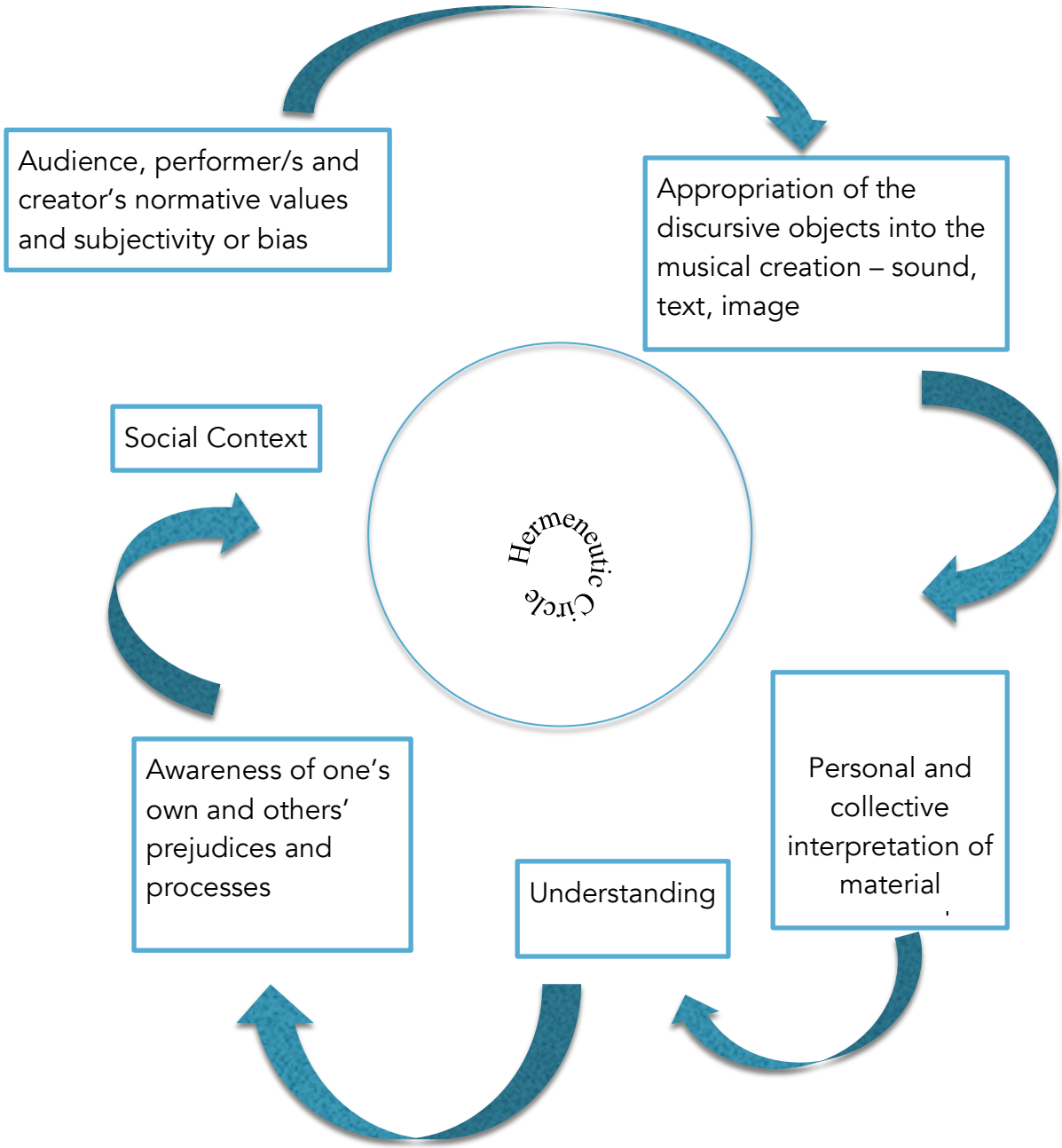

Figure 29: Hermeneutic Circle

8.1.5 Heterotopia: The Imaginary Space

The Heterotopia model represents the culmination of this project: creating a context for understanding the artistic realisation of intercultural knowledge and experience. This space is an ecology: a set of relationships, the music, the performance, a symbiosis of elements of the cultures, collaborations and connections that have occurred. And it is more than this. It is the space between cultures where the imagination creates a methodology for exchange, the processes that create the engagement and the experience that generates new knowledge. It is a space to evaluate reality, to re-evaluate values and for self-reflection. It is the place for artistic 'living reality'.

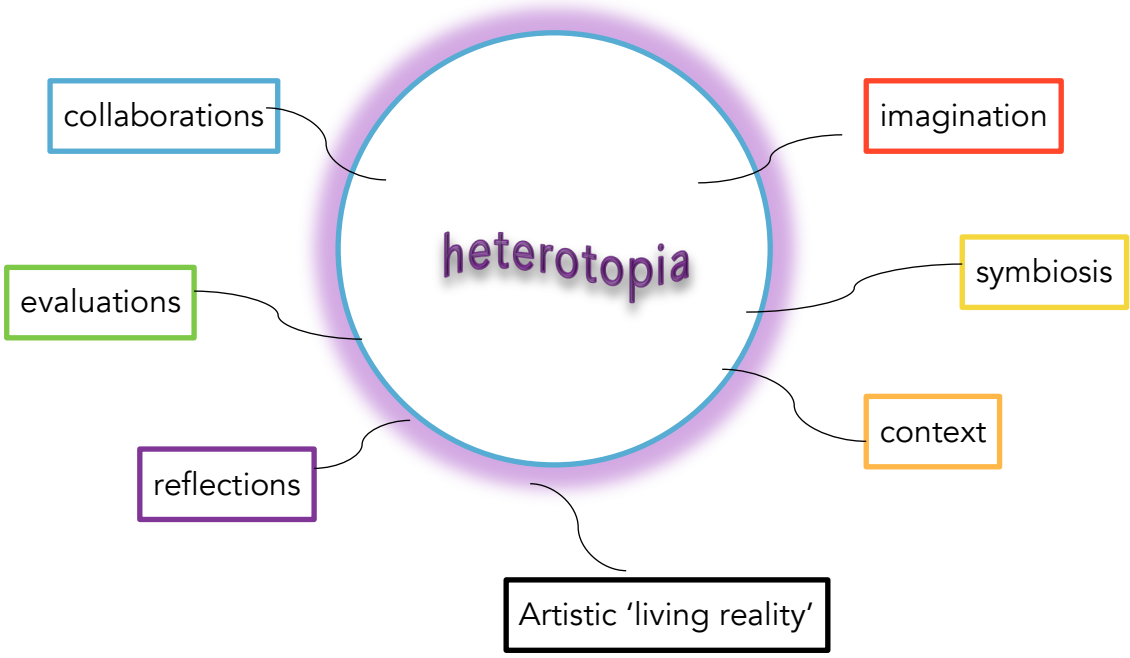

Figure 30. Heterotopia: The Imaginary Space.

CHAPTER 9: REFLECTIONS AND FINDINGS

9.1 Achieving the Aims

The project was practice-led, and the performances were pivotal – providing the motivation for the compositions and explorations leading up to performances, and subsequent reflective critiques. The importance of the performance space as a place for creating and communicating understanding was crucial. Both creativity and performance responses were strongly influenced by the juxtaposition of musical knowledge from cultural practices, expressed through the electroacoustic music. This was additionally reflected in the audience responses to performances.

Community knowledge of these intercultural activities and revelations was expanded in numerous ways: through the audiences in Malaysia (mostly university students and staff), through national and international audiences at conferences and concerts (again, mostly university students and staff), through the diverse community of interdisciplinary arts practitioners and academics at the Commonwealth Intercultural Arts Network forums (University of Cambridge) and through the journal and book chapter publication outcomes (Malaysia and the UK).

9.2 Negotiating the spaces and research questions

The questions posed in this research project have revolved around performance, composition and intercultural connections. As researcher/participants we have experienced changes in expectations throughout the process. In Phase 1, enthusiasm was strong, but progress evolved slowly. Nevertheless the tracks were laid in this phase, with interesting music, investigations and interactions. In Phase 2 we began to question many aspects of both the project and the connections we were trying to make. Marvellous music was being made, but our ideas for the interchange were continuously needing revision. Just what were we uncovering about the central questions? The improvisations in this phase provided a salve in this regard – as we took musical inspiration and sounds and made them our own. A freedom ensued, and a reversion to what we consider ‘normative’ music making. Phase 3 involved a huge

community project with international creators, local and international performers and logistics. It was fabulous, but required questioning and reflection to determine the real value and point to it all. Ultimately it was a very exciting event that produced extraordinary memories and material for investigation. The organ phase brought in a new aspect to the interculturality, and also created a challenge for locals and disruptions to their expectations. Organ music was seen as having a particular (conservative) function and shape. Using it as an instrument of cultural connection in contemporary art music expanded people's understandings, at least a little. Again, some very interesting works evolved. The final heterotopia stage brought the project to a culmination of performance interaction and reflection.

We found that the aesthetics of Malaysian traditional music and Western art music have some things in common, but are also very disparate in intentionality. Sounds and practices have different meanings, and there was a distinct effort to preserve the original ethos of Malaysian artifacts. This resulted in the fixed sound tracks accompanying the *musique-mixte* works, and the passing over of responsibility for the live electronics to us entirely. Consequently the real-time interactions were carried out with sonic representations of cultures rather than each other; the correspondences were virtual in a sense, and the dialogue somewhat one-sided. Nevertheless, the music outcomes were unique, provided rich materials for research and were greatly appreciated by all participants.

Negotiating these spaces between the internal and external interculturalities, and creating a musical correspondence, a shared experience of cultural diversities was central, and occurred in all performances. The performance spaces developed as ecologies, as relationships between players, sounds, scores, instruments, electronically generated sounds, and listeners. This created a place for presenting ideas, and gathering new information about each other, about musical responses and about process. A clarity of understanding could occur in this music, and successfully open the listener/spectator to the other and the different. This was particularly in evidence with the audience responses. There was a clear appreciation of the East/West dialogues happening in the music. The concept of 'art as a living reality' – in this sense, as communication of performers and audiences – was also strong and real.

That understandings of East/West cultural elements can create understanding in music is obvious, but how was this achieved in this project? It can be successful if

the listeners can listen critically and analytically, and also if they can allow themselves to respond emotionally to the music. This aspect was clear to us, and was particularly emphasised when Malaysian artifacts were heard in the works. This recognition of sounds – whether recorded traditional instruments, environmental sounds or sounds which are reminiscent of what might be categorized as Malaysian sound – seems to be an important factor in the comprehension of Malaysians of this music. With this recognition, acceptance of the different seemed to become easier (for example, the electroacoustic sound effects). The mix of Western and Malaysian instrumental sound was also appreciated, with many listeners commenting on the sonorities and expression of the instruments. A juxtaposition, then, of different cultural practices can successfully communicate knowledge about both cultures through a symbiosis of sound and aesthetic. Every work in the project generated a compositional and performance creativity that brought us closer together from the inside, as well as externally.

9.3 Concluding Reflections

As electroacoustic technologies forge new sounds, understandings and performances, performative identities shift and new interchanges develop through a fusion of practices and cultures. Differences in the relationship of Eastern and Western musicians to their instrument, the diverse rituals of each and cultural meanings of bodily engagement provide a rich exploratory field, as do the spaces of performance, and the devised spaces of electroacoustic performance. Assimilation of Eastern and Western aesthetics, sounds, musical gestures, melody and effects is more than a blending of elements, or a simple interchangeability. It is more than the collection of exotic sonic materials, and more than an adoption of various performative presentation techniques.

In considering all the works and elements within this project, exploring the sounds and connections between cultures, the same questions kept arising: how do we describe and define interculturality, and what do we understand as the ‘imaginary space’ that exists between? Answers were not clear-cut or definitive, but remain framed in the contexts and parameters outlined earlier in this report. We find that Allwood’s explanation that it ‘... is not cultures that communicate, whatever that

might imply, but people (and possibly social institutions) with different cultural backgrounds that do' (Allwood 1995) holds true, and that what we have found in the examples discussed here is communication and a growing understanding between individuals. Also, the two cultures have a meeting point, created by the DSP, which aurally locates the listeners and performers in a virtual space. Within this space the differing cultures engage dialogically, each losing and gaining identity as musical events warp and weft with each other. The connections, discussions and artistic interactions which have occurred between the authors and composers all validate this argument.

That this is intercultural, and that the space(s) between the cultures can be connected through new music, is supported by the hermeneutic conditions explained by Gadamer who makes it clear that, to him, hermeneutics is not a method for understanding but an attempt 'to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place' (Gadamer 1975: 263). When we view this in light of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological theories, we can correlate our personal experiences with Gadamer's explanation of the 'true historical object' – the phenomenology we have experienced in the creation and performance of works of differing cultural heritage, and in that phenomenology we can argue that what our 'intercultural relationship' determines is '... worth enquiring about, but we also find that, by following the criterion of intelligibility, the other presents itself so much in terms of our own selves that there is no longer a question of self and other' (Gadamer 1975: 268, cited in Holtorf ND). Phenomenology concerns itself with the self and experience, and human relationships to provide the possibilities of interpretation and meaning. So, the phenomenological process of self and other in the creative process which leads to performance, is integral to the evolution of a creative intercultural interaction, *and that* in turn provides some clarity of the spaces and connections we seek to identify.

As previously noted, Nicolas Bourriaud's (1998:13) description of the role of artworks as actual 'ways of living and models of action' encapsulates the processes and aims of this project to create an 'imaginary space' where interactions between cultures can be explored and new understandings evolve.

Our work in creating contexts for intercultural music explorations in Malaysia transformed the space of performance into 'models of action', where the music became the space, and the action became the living reality.

From all these thoughts, it is clear that this project exploring interconnections between cultures – Malaysian and 'Western' art music – has been richly rewarding. The possibilities which are opened, exploring both cultures as they intersect, yet each remaining ... 'what it [already] is', are abundant. As we constructed methodologies, create new systems for analysis, new models for investigation and new tools for synthesis, our work rewarded with regeneration of artistic insight and direction. Emerging knowledge has been underlined by emerging musical styles and sounds, generating an Imaginary Space for creativity and musicality through diversity and exchange.

An outcome essential to the whole project was the identification and synthesis of three existing ontologies: traditional Malaysian music, what we can describe as 'new' music, and electroacoustic music. Electroacoustic music, in this case music for live instrumentalist and electronics, is common throughout the Western world, but in Malaysia it is not. Through developing a style that incorporates elements of traditional musics, new electroacoustic works establish points of contact, or recognition, amongst audiences. The performance space can be re-imagined, the interaction of the performers modified and the combination of meanings, aesthetics and new perceptions has been shown to create a context and potential for intercultural response.

Bringing the mixture of music traditions and cutting-edge contemporary techniques (realtime digital signal processing) into a performance environment in Malaysia has been unexplored territory. The performance space has been re-imagined, the interaction of the performers modified and the combination of meanings, aesthetics and new perceptions have created a context and potential for intercultural response. By working on the creation and performance of new works and incorporating a live-electronic performance dimension, the two backgrounds have come together with a new dialogue which is both culturally significant and musically exciting. In this the performers, in partnership with Malaysian composers, have added to the local cultural musical practice and heritage. Through these actions we have attempted to establish models of process, and extensions to all our thinking.

The significance of this research can be seen in the developing strength of interdisciplinary and international collaboration from these different fields of expertise (electroacoustic, performance and composition) within a practice-led artistic research environment. The composition and performance of this new intercultural work

represents an application of new knowledge, presented as a musical work, as personal explorations, and as a method for creating a broader awareness of understandings of interculturalism, East/West connections and *musique-mixte* amongst Malaysian practitioners.

9.5 Future Research Pathways

The possibilities for future research emanating from this research project are very substantial. Already work within another FRGS project (*Spectromorphological notation: Notating the un-notatable?)* is taking on knowledge and experience from *The Imaginary Space* project to activate explorations in that related field. That project has established strong links to international research groups working to develop knowledge about scientific representations of sound; we are bringing an intercultural and performative focus to this research.

The development of the models in Phase 5 opens immense opportunities for further explorations in multiple music environments. Having articulated the processes of action and thinking in this way, these can be fruitfully applied to other research. They will form the basis of subsequent projects by the researchers, and be disseminated through ongoing publications, presentations and post-graduate teaching.

Further intercultural research could include:

Developing a new electroacoustic research group to explore elements of Malaysian and other music practices;

Developing the advanced technological capacity to set up large research projects on contemporary art music practices in Malaysia of interest to international researchers;

Initiation of a wider intercultural dialogue to explore cultural significance and aesthetics of sounds, multiplicities of identity and diverse layers of meaning.

Our wish is to develop long-term intercultural music studies from a variety of perspectives. Notation, cultural structures, space and time structures are a few of these. The performance will remain central to future research as this is our space of discovery – where we find out musical things that tell us about people through actions

and interactions with musical material and constructs, aesthetic backgrounds, perceptions of culture, and new understandings of life.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Research Outputs

Peer reviewed journal, book and proceedings publications

1. Blackburn, A. and Penny, J. (2014) Imaginary spaces: New Malaysian performance contexts for intercultural exploration. In *Organised Sound* Vol 19(2) Cambridge University Press, UK
2. Penny, J. (2013) Electroacoustic Music as Intercultural Exploration: Synergies of Breath in Extended Western Flute and Malaysian Nose Flute Playing. Performance Studies Network International Conference, Online proceedings. University of Cambridge, UK Accessible at http://www.cmpcp.ac.uk/PSN2/PSN2013_Penny.pdf
3. Penny, J. (2014) Unraveling Intercultural Knowledge Through Performative Contexts: A Flautist's Perspective. Chapter in *Sustainability in Music and the Performing Arts: Heritage, Education and Performance*. UPSI. Upcoming publication, November 2014
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5. Penny, J. (2015) The mediated space: Voices of interculturalism in music for flute. Chapter in *International Handbook of Intercultural Arts*, Routledge. Upcoming Publication 2015

Performance publications of project compositions

1. Sonorities Festival and Symposium, Queens University, Belfast, UK April 2012 (*Improvisation 1*)
2. UPSI, Talk-Play-Think Academic talks series, October 2012 (world premier of *The Screaming Serunai*)

3. National University of Singapore. The Performers Voice Conference. November 2012. (*The Screaming Serunai)*
4. UPSI. Music: An Amazing Place (*The Screaming Serunai*) 2013
5. UPSI. Synergies Chamber Music (recital including world premier of *Synergies I* for flute and electronics) 2013
6. UiTM. Concert participation (Synergies I) 2013
7. University of Cambridge, Churchill College (*Synergies I and Synergies II*) 2013
8. UPSI. Transitions and Counterpoint: Music for flutes (recital including cross cultural works) March 2014
9. UPSI, FSKIK Pentagon (The Imaginary Space compositions) October 2014
10. UPSI, IMPAC Conference performance (*The Screaming Serunai*) November 2014

Research presentations: Conferences, seminars

1. *Unraveling intercultural knowledge through performative contexts: an insider's account.* University of Cambridge, Faculty of Music, Performance Studies Network International Conference (July 2014)
2. *Symbolic Exchanges – Creating Contexts for Understanding Interculturality*. MusPA Conference, UPSI, Malaysia. (November 2013)
3. *CIAN Forum 3: Re-framing Interdisciplinary Perspectives.* Facilitators – CIAN Fellows Dr Jean Penny & Dr Andrew Blackburn. University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education. Commonwealth Intercultural Arts Network (October 2013)
4. *The Imaginary Space*. University of Cambridge, Homerton College Research Seminar presentation. (October 2013)
5. *Electroacoustic Music as Intercultural Exploration: Synergies of Breath in Extended Western Flute and Malaysian Nose Flute Playing.* University of Cambridge, Faculty of Music, Performance Studies Network International Conference (April 2013)

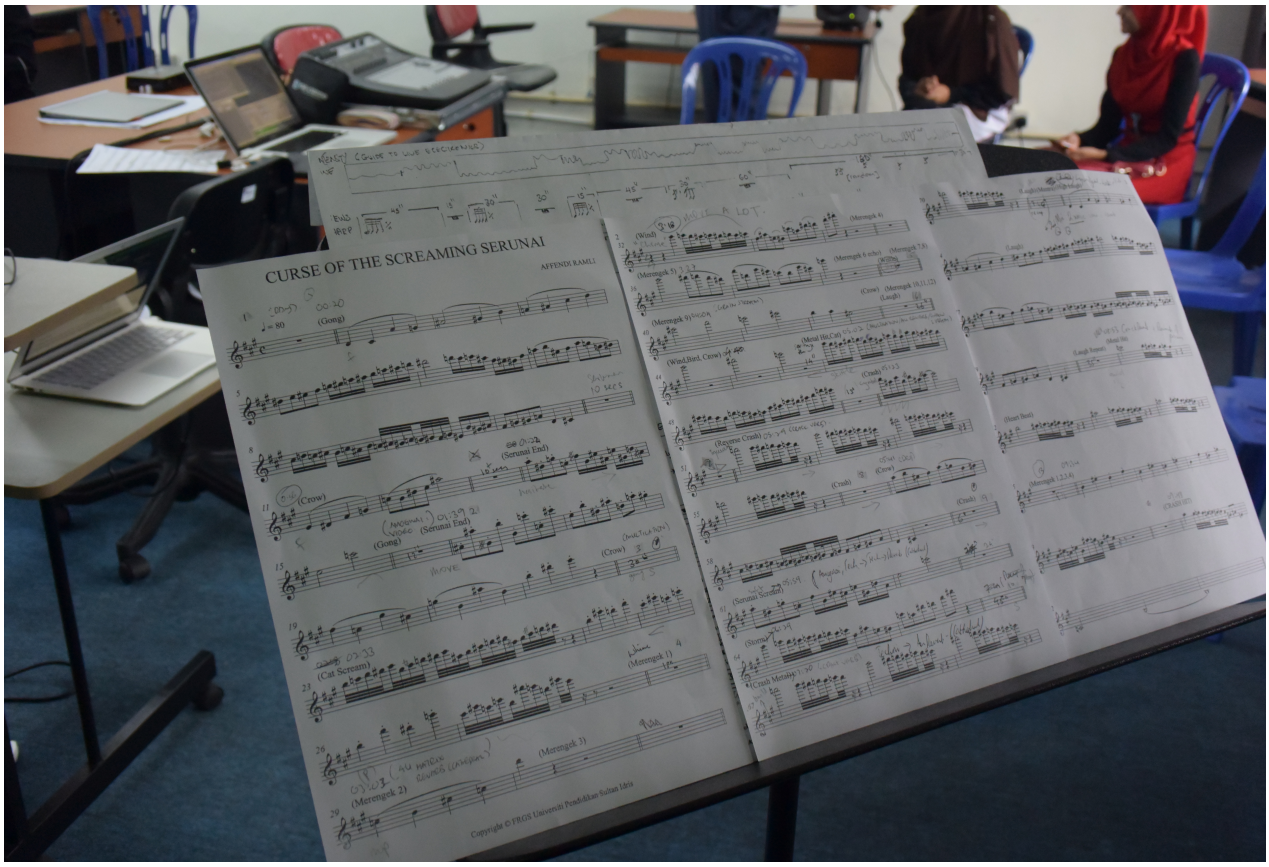
6. *Within and Beyond the Flute Cage: Performing Ryonaji.* JOHNCAGE101 International Conference, UPSI, Malaysia. (August, 2013)
7. *Electroacoustic Music as Intercultural Exploration: Synergies of Breath in Extended Western Flute and Malaysian Nose Flute Playing* Seminar Presentation: The Institute of Contemporary Music, London, UK. (April, 2013)
8. *The Imaginary Space: Performing new 'mixed music' works as intercultural exploration*. The Performer's Voice Symposium, Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, National University of Singapore. (October 2012)
9. *Embodying intercultural identities: a flautist's perspective of East/West electro-acoustic performance*. Sonorities Festival And Two Thousand + Symposium. Queens University, Belfast, UK. (March, 2012). Performance.
10. *The Imaginary Space*. Monash University, Australia, Faculty of Education. Seminar presentation: August 2012
11. *The Imaginary Space*. UPSI Talk-Play-Think Series of Academic Lectures. October 2012
12. *The Imaginary Space: Synergies of Breath.* Composium, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia (September, 2013)
13. Unraveling intercultural knowledge through performative contexts: an insider's account. UPSI IMPAC Conference November 2014

Recordings

Live recordings of performances
Studio recordings of Improvisations

APPENDIX 2: Notation – Affendi Ramli *The Curse of the Screaming Serunai* (2012)

Score excerpt (flute part)



APPENDIX 3: Interview with Mr Rahman, Museum Director, Kota Bharu

Transcribed and translated by Alwin Wong Ru Kiet

WAYANG KULIT

Divided by two

One of the melody are conducted by "Gendang" and "Gong" which mean no "Gedombak" and "Geduk"

The other one is lead by "Gedombak" , There are also "Gedombak" song used to accompany singing or describe about walking for the hulubalang and war situation/scene (It's depend on the story, scene, and character).

There are 32 songs in wayang kulit and 50-60 songs in Mak Yong. Some of the scene in Mak Yong are also used for Wayang Kulit for example Kijang Emas, Pandang Wangi, and Chagak Manis. At the time, tok dalang also will sing for Wayang Kulit, especially for the prince and princess.

Every instrument has their specific kind of meaning in every scene or situation. For example, in Mak Yong when they want to show the war situation/scene, "Geduk" will be used because of its brave sound.

Lagu Bertabuh / Overture (12 Ragam)

It has 12 styles of beating the "Geduk". "Geduk" is followed by "Gedombak" and the music will be lead by "Serunai". The title is based on the contain of the song, that's why in Wayang Kulit they called it as 12 language & 12 styles (12 bahasa & 12 ragam).

"Gong", "Kesi", and "Canang" playing important role in every song because they will keep the beat on and played it non-stop. If "Gedombak" is played, it will be followed by "Geduk" and if "Gendang" played then there are no "Geduk" and "Gedombak" will be played/followed.

Comparation Between Flute & Serunai

Scale – Serunai is only build with one key and scale, which mean it can't play any chromatic scale as in flute.

Key Mechanism – The key mechanism (tone hole) for serunai is simple and it is not complex as flute, that's why flute can be played in a lot of key and scale.

Breathing – Every serunai player should know/learn the circle breathing technique while not necessary for the flutist because a song will sound like non-stop/no phrasing if using the circle breathing. Serunai player store the air in the mouth while the "circle thing" near the reed is used to block the air so it will not be released through mouth while player are doing the circle breathing and also will not produced any unwanted sound during taking breath. Serunai player takes the breath based on the phrasing.

How they learn Serunai? – Most people that are quick learner for Wayang Kulit instrument are who had hereditary by the ancestor and start learning since they are young. All the serunai player must know various kind of song and of course will be played by memorized. They believed that people who can sing well also will produced beautiful serunai sound.

Serunai sound are produced through the "Pipit" which known as reed in Oboe. "Pipit" are made from Tar Leaf (Papyrus or Sea Coconut) it will be folded into 4 pieces tied and cut based on the conformity. To obtain the quality "Pipit", it must through a certain process such as planting of the staple tar, location, leaf election, stew, drying and many more.

At the beginning of the song, the serunai player will blow certain note which known as tuning to test and identify whether it is ready to be played.

Therapy / Pathlogy Through The Sonic

- There are certain word that been taken/selected to be said during the therapy and when we said it out with the melody it can really stimulate/boost up human spirit.
- The sound goes into human heart, blood, and mind will help to cure the patients although they are laying on the ground.
- There are serunai will be played at the same time.
- When Serunai and Gendang is played by mistake, the patients will feel disturbed and getting angry with the music.

Tuning Of Serunai

- Serunai is based on the reed. Player have to adjust the hole and ensure the reed are always in wet condition.

- The technique of teeth and tongue are important to produced different or various types of sound, depend on the story/scene. Teeth also playing important role for the pitch and dynamic.
- The position of serunai reed in mouth : The reed will never hit/exceed the teeth.
- To get higher pitch in serunai, the reed hole must be smaller.

Spiritual Connection Between Western Music & Wayang Kulit

- Serunai player need a partner which is Tok Dalang. If the Tok Dalang sing very well, it also will affect the serunai sound produced.
- It is also how the player deliver the music.
- Interpretation to the music.
- Same as collaboration/combination of duet playing in western music.

Pitch Bending In Serunai

- Just for fun
- Style of blowing
- Expressive of the blower
- Blowing as we are talking

Mr. Rahman Working Experience

He is the only Director of the museum and no assistant director. Been working as the director since 1993-1995 after that quit and accept the job as District Officer at Tanah Merah. After the museum been upgraded, he come back again to working as Director. Mr. Rahman learn a lot of Kelantan Cultural not only music of Wayang Kulit but their Arts, Cultural, Dance, Muay Thai, Dikir Barat, Gamelan and many more. He started play the gong at the age of 5 years old, Wayang Kulit for Mr Rahman is from ancestor that has been passed from his father generation to his generation. He's born in a village which rich of cultural. His main goal is to preserve and make sure the Wayang Kulit is keep growing. He also train the young generation all about Wayang Kulit so they will appreciate this valuable treasure. Apart from playing music for Wayang Kulit, Mr Rahman are also judge for the Dikir Bakat (although he admit sing not as good as the other but still can hear and give comment) and Self-defense Arts (Silat). He said that everything Malay people do has their own meaning, for example Carving. He admit that as a leader, he must be able to explain everything/whatever about the cultural.

Design Of Seri Rama (Wayang Kulit Puppet)

- Cannot be simply crave.
- Cannot do own design
- All the design or craving has it own meaning especially the colour and accessories.

Correct design of Seri Rama

- Seri Rama crown has 7 stages which mean the 7 layers of the sky.
- **Neck :** Must has correct special flower. The flower known as "Bunga Kembang 5 or 7" it is white, fragrant, and also reliable by the ancients that the flower can bring back the dead.
- **Weapon :** Bow (without the string), Small Dagger (Keris) and Small Miracle Stick.
- **Colour :** Skin is white with light green light.

Design of Serunai

- Has no specific colour or design meaning
- The hole inside are same and straight, just the design outside shaped and carve with flower design.

The first dalang in Kelantan was a Siam woman and second is her husband. They went to Jawa to learn all about Wayang Kulit and come back to teach all the people in Kelantan.

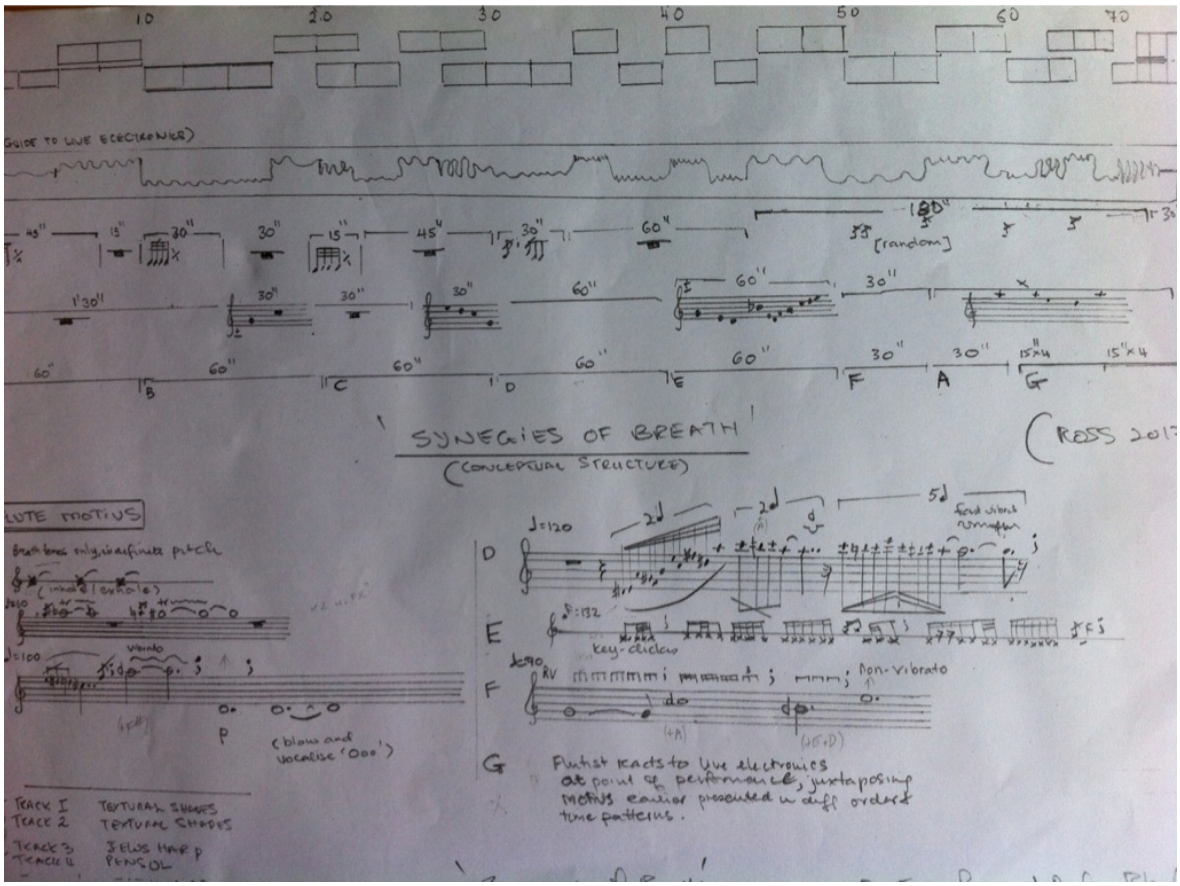
Wayang Kulit is actually been banned by the government in Kelantan because of the conflict with the Hindu but it start allowed when it been transform into new style/version by using Malay warrior character such as Hang Tuah, Hang Jebat for the storyline. They don't want to use the Seri Rama name because of the name to God of Hindu.

Understanding Of Cultural

- If there are something unsuitable or conflict with the culture, don't ban it otherwise try to understand and improve or improvise so it will be convenient with the new generation.
- Culture is the identity/symbol of a nation.
- Introduce the Wayang Kulit into academia and develop an institution for the research and development so it will keep growing for the next generation.

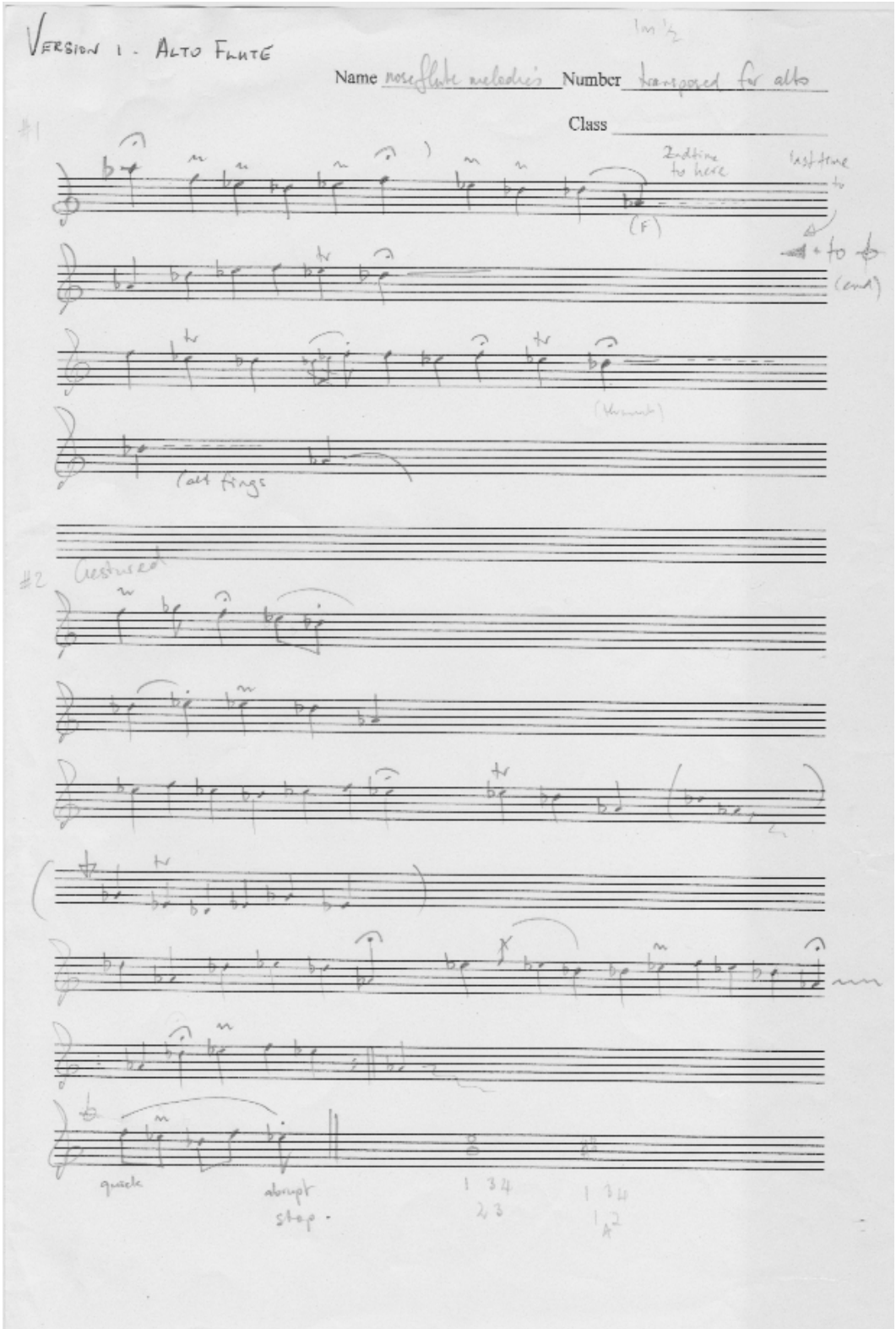
APPENDIX 4: Notation – Valerie Ross – *Synergies of Breath I* (2013)

Score excerpt (flute, electronics and fixed sound parts).

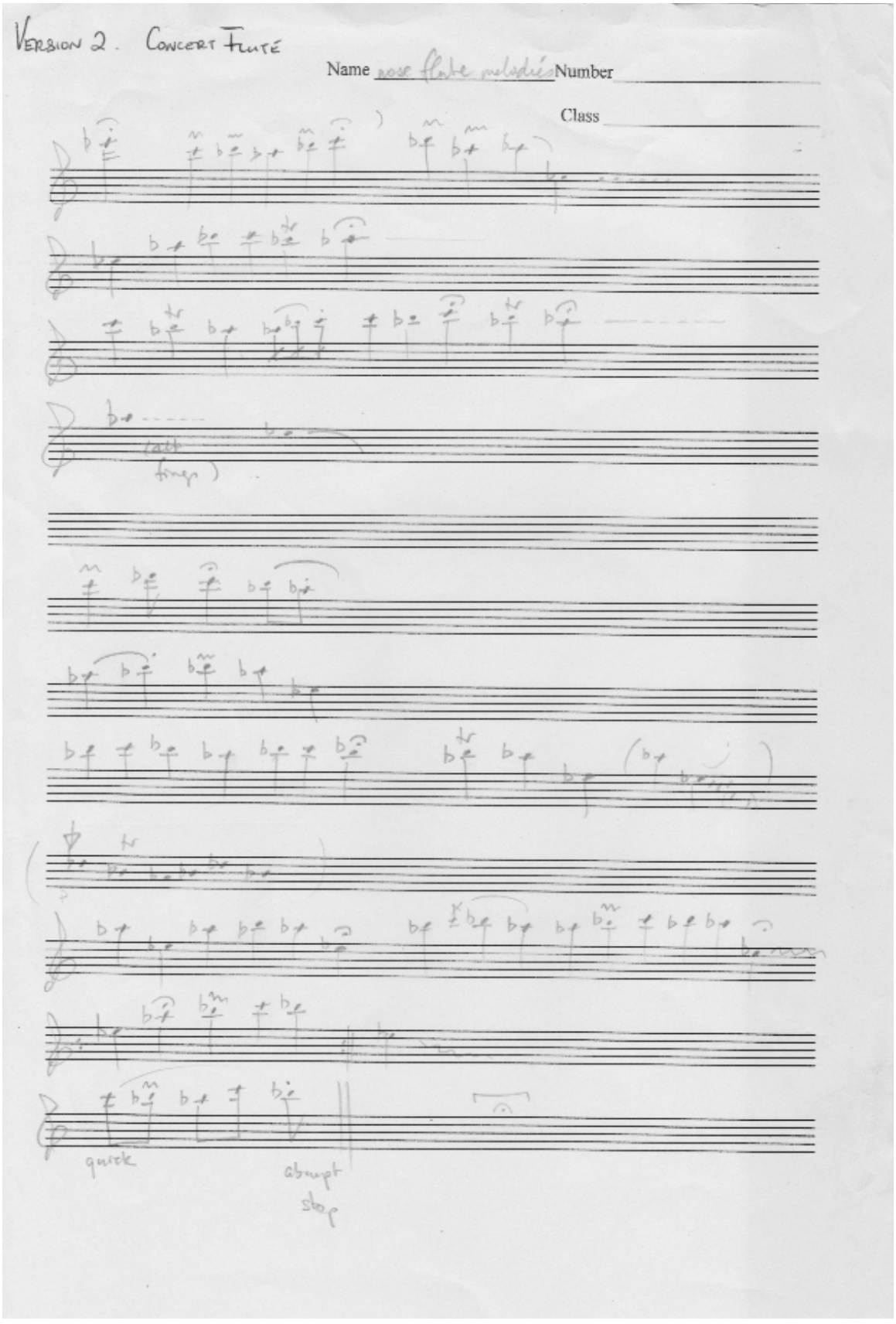


APPENDIX 5: Notation: Penny and Blackburn – Two Improvisations

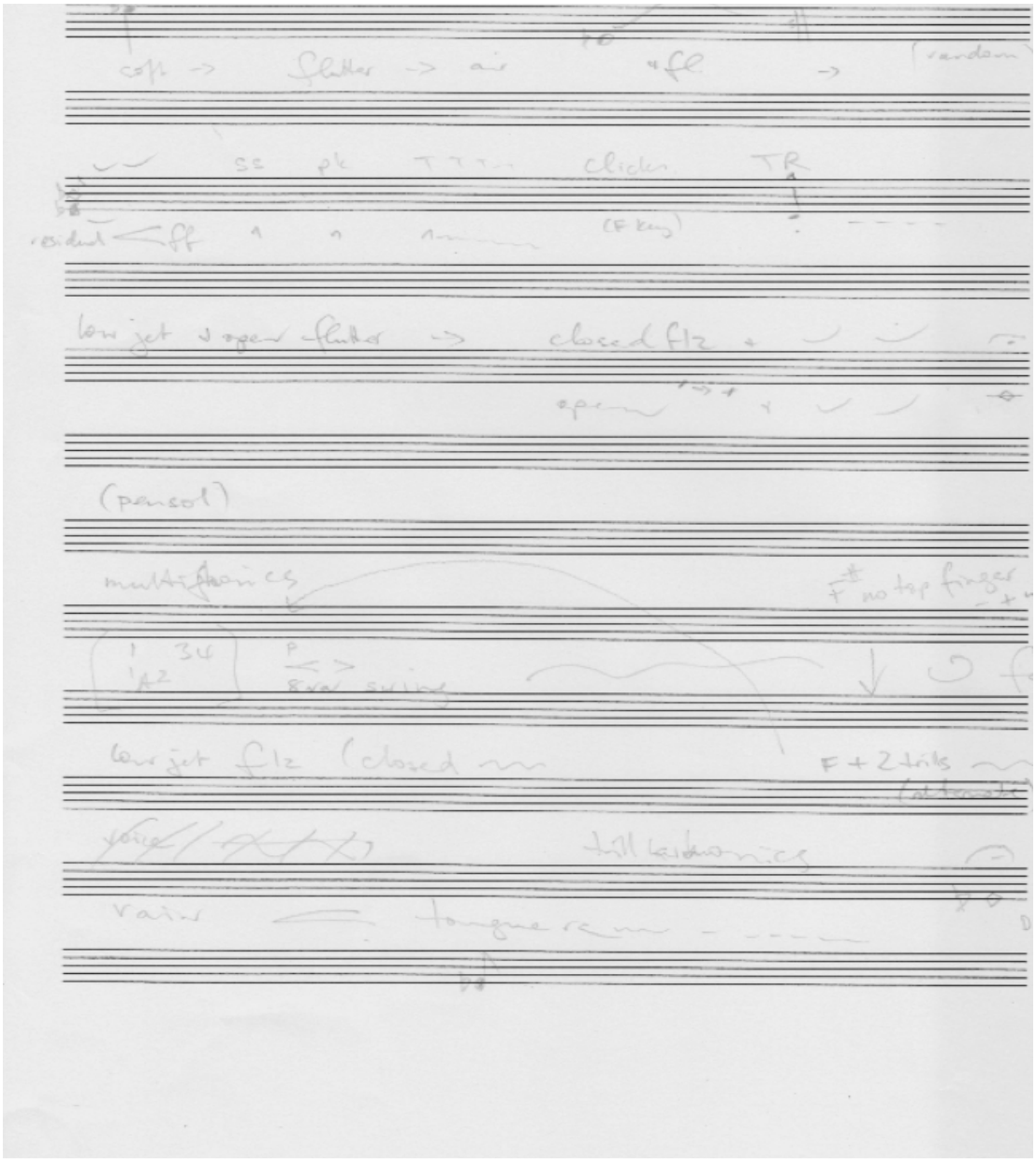
[seruling] perak. Score excerpts (flute part): Version 1 (Jean Penny)

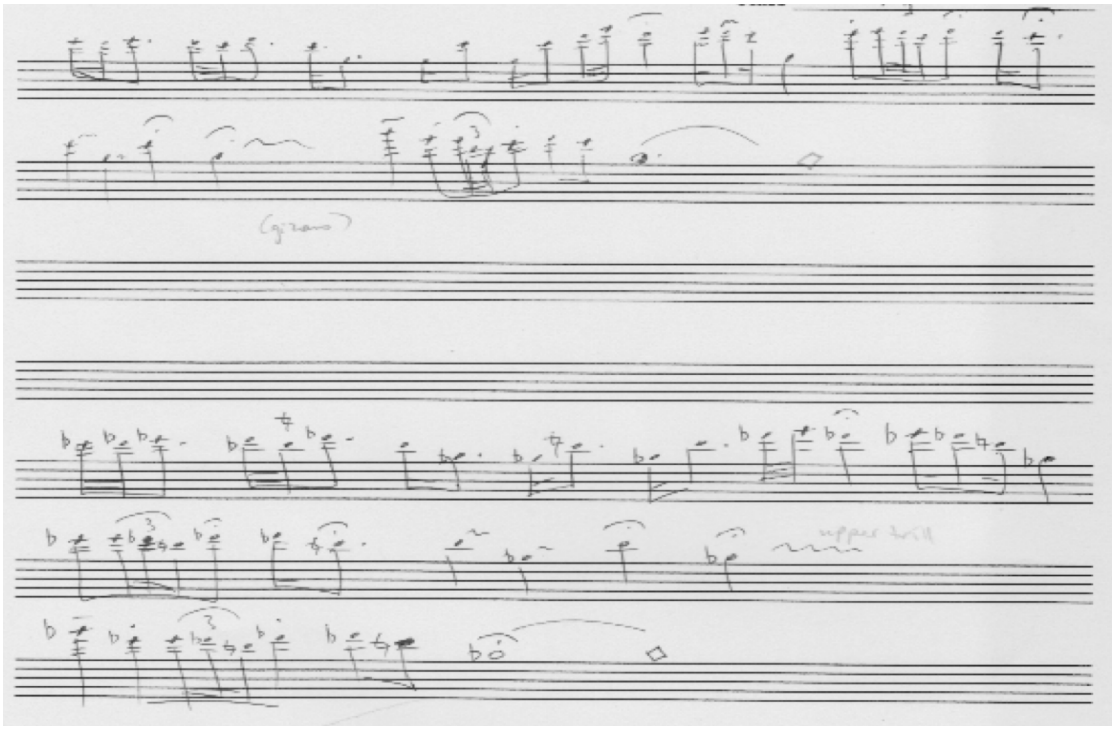


[seruling] perak. Version 2.



Improvisatory materials, *[seruling] perak*.Version 2.




(grave)
upper trill

APPENDIX 6: Survey results – Landy matrix, adapted by Blackburn

1.Memento Memori

Survey results

Memento Memoria - A Malaysian Circus on The Garden of Evening Mists

1. Did you hear Malaysian Music and Instruments?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	56.1%	23
A Little	41.5%	17
Not Sure	2.4%	1
Other (please specify)		0
answered question		41
skipped question		0

2. Did you hear sounds from the Malaysian environment?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	70.7%	29
A Little	26.8%	11
Not Sure	2.4%	1
Comment		0
answered question		41
skipped question		0

3. Did you hear sounds that were strange?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	36.6%	15
A Little	53.7%	22
Not sure	9.8%	4
answered question		41
skipped question		0

4. Did you recognise images in the projection?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count

A Lot	52.5%	21
A Little	45.0%	18
Not Sure	2.5%	1
answered question		40
skipped question		1

5. Did you understand a narrative or story?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	22.0%	9
A Little	48.8%	20
Not Sure	29.3%	12
answered question		41
skipped question		0

6. Did you hear a mix of East and West elements?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	41.5%	17
A Little	48.8%	20
Not Sure	9.8%	4
answered question		41
skipped question		0

7. Were you aware of technical processes occurring during this piece?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	26.8%	11
A Little	56.1%	23
Not Sure	17.1%	7
answered question		41
skipped question		0

8. Did the title of the piece help your understanding of it?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	19.5%	8
A Little	58.5%	24
Not Sure	22.0%	9
answered question		41
skipped question		0

9. Did the piece convey any emotion to you?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	27.5%	11
A Little	50.0%	20
Not Sure	22.5%	9
answered question		40
skipped question		1

10. Would you like to see/hear other pieces like this?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A Lot	36.6%	15
A Little	34.1%	14
Not Sure	29.3%	12
answered question		41
skipped question		0

11. Do you have any other comments, questions, or concerns?	
Answer Options	Response Count
	13
answered question	13
skipped question	28

Number	Response Text
1	Nice
2	Love the evocative, ethereal, atmospheric experience triggered by somewhat haunting yet emotionally evoked mixtures of technology, visuals, art West and East musical instruments, background (recorded music and ambience, dance and vocals (so many wonderfully blended elements intertwining with each other)
3	This composition has open my mind to think out of the box about music. Thank you for excellent performance.
4	It was nice and I'm so grateful to know about the Malaysian music & instruments
5	I hope it can be more better next time.
6	Things happened once in a blue moon. I never heard this kind of event before. Feel so lucky that I had this chance to listen and experience. AWESOME! I wish and hope that this conference can be held every two

years and so on.

7 Yes, I don't understand what are you asking?

8 Yes, I'm not so understand

9 I didn't understand

10 I like the flow of the work a lot. Perhaps the images could be shown for different amounts of time each? But I enjoyed this a lot, the soundscape itself was greatly interesting. Some of the live musicians needed amplification to match the recorded material.

11 Good approach for non-musical students to express their feelings through sounds.

1. How are we going to determine the dynamic sound photograph you presented?

12 2. It was good to see the effect of digitisation on the Art of Music and the Malaysian and Western music instruments.

13 Saya telak sangat bersermok dengan persembahan yang sangat menarik ini.

APPENDIX 7: Publications

Programme booklet for *Memento Memoria*

Creating Memento Memori (Andrew Blackburn)

Introduction

The notion that the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts at the Sultan Idris Education University could stage a performance of John Cage's "-- Circus on -- a means of translating a book into a performance without actors" (1979) had its genesis at a conference of new music in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 2012. … At the Belfast conference, we attended a performance of John Cage / Ciaran Carson: "Owenvarragh: A Belfast Circus on The Star Factory". In simple settings and with live musicians and a wonderful sound scape drawn from around Belfast, the performance created "a collection of evocations of Belfast…a book of snapshots…." and "a vision of Belfast as personally recreated as Joyce's Dublin." We were very keen to create a similar collection of evocations of Malaysia, with its extraordinary sounds, images and feelings. Jean and I considered this, and explored some Malaysian literary works, finally settling on Tan Twan Eng's beautiful and evocative recent novel, "The Garden of Evening Mists.10" We are further encouraged by the support of Mr Tan and his publishers as they gave their permission to use the text without hesitation. It is a story of memories, and loss, but above all a story of resolution intertwined with Malaysia's recent history. Re-reading it a couple of times, and thinking about the possibilities of using it as our text for this piece, we were, more and more drawn to its potential. Already in touch with Warren Burt and Catherine Schieve about the possibility of them being involved in the conference, we broached the idea that Cage's '-- Circus On --' might be a part of the conference. They were very keen to be involved, and, knowing of Warren's compositions and his encounters with Cage, in addition to Catherine's work with visual scores and art, it seemed a perfect combination. So a process was begun - and process is exactly what has been occurring over the last eighteen months or so. In retrospect, it is similar to Cage's compositional process, with chance encounters, opportunities, meetings and interactions shaping and organizing the final outcome.

The work and sound design which underpins this whole performance has been constructed using Cage's own working methods - I Ching and various other chance operations. Many of these, such as the mesostics poems are already present in Cage's instructions, which we have faithfully followed. Most of the sounds and images for the production were collected by Dr Catherine Schieve and Dr Andrew Blackburn from sites mentioned in the text - in particular the Cameron Highlands, Kuala Lumpur and general environmental sounds from around Malaysia. Other sounds were recorded by diploma students from UPSI. Some indigenous instrumental sounds – pensol (owe flute) from tapah, Perak, and Rangot (jew's harp) from Kampar, Perak – were added to the soundscape courtesy of ethnomusicologists, Dr. Clare Chan Suet Ching (UPSI) & Associate Professor Dr. Valerie Ross (UiTM).

(footnote)

[10] Used with the kind permission of Mr Eng and his publishers Myrmidon Press.

Pensol (Nose flute) music titled "Wak Jenudi" (a female spiritguide) performed by Alang s/o Bah Kang, a Semai musician from Tapah, Perak, Malaysia.
Rangot (jew's harp) music titled "Cengkuk" (dusky leaf monkey) performed by Bah Kang s/o Bah Mat, a Semai shaman from Kampar, Perak, Malaysia

Synopsis of “The Garden of Evening Mists”
Malaya, 1949. After studying law at Cambridge and time spent helping to prosecute Japanese war criminals, Yun Ling Teoh, herself the scarred lone survivor of a brutal Japanese wartime camp, seeks solace among the jungle fringed plantations of Northern Malaya where she grew up as a child. There she discovers Yugiri, the only Japanese garden in Malaya, and its owner and creator, the enigmatic Aritomo, exiled former gardener of the Emperor of Japan.
Despite her hatred of the Japanese, Yun Ling seeks to engage Aritomo to create a garden in Kuala Lumpur, in memory of her sister who died in the camp. Aritomo refuses, but agrees to accept Yun Ling as his apprentice 'until the monsoon comes.' Then she can design a garden for herself. As the months pass, Yun Ling finds herself intimately drawn to her sensei and his art while, outside the garden, the threat of murder and kidnapping from the guerrillas of the jungle hinterland increases with each passing day.
But the Garden of Evening Mists is also a place of mystery. Who is Aritomo and how did he come to leave Japan? Why is it that Yun Ling's friend and host Magnus Praetorius, seems to almost immune from the depredations of the Communists? What is the legend of 'Yamashita's Gold' and does it have any basis in fact? And is the real story of how Yun Ling managed to survive the war perhaps the darkest secret of all?
(From Myrmidon Press)

Cage’s Mesostics
"Like acrostics, mesostics are written in the conventional way horizontally, but at the same time they follow a vertical rule, down the middle not down the edge as in an acrostic, a string spells a word or name, not necessarily connected with what is being written, though it may be. This vertical rule is lettristic and in my practice the letters are capitalized. Between two capitals in a perfect or 100% mesostic neither letter may appear in lower case. .... In the writing of the wing words, the horizontal text, the letters of the vertical string help me out of sentimentality. I have something to do, a puzzle to solve. This way of responding makes me feel in this respect one with the Japanese people, who formerly, I once learned, turned their letter writing into the writing of poems. In taking the next step in my work, the exploration of nonintention, I don't solve the puzzle that the mesostic string presents. Instead I write or find a source text which is then used as an oracle. I ask it what word shall I use for this letter and what one for the next, etc. This frees me from memory, taste, likes, and dislikes, By means of Mesolist, a program by Jim Rosenberg, all words that satisfy the mesostic rule are listed. IC [a program that generates the I Ching numbers, available for downloading on the Net] then chooses which words in the lists are to be used and gives me all the central words, the position of each in the source material identified by page, line, and column. I then add all the wing words from the source text following of course the rule Mesolist does within the limit of forty-five characters to the right and the same to the left. Then I take out the words I don't want. With respect to the source material, I am in a global situation. Words come first from here and then from

there. The situation is not linear. It is as though I am in a forest hunting for ideas." -- John Cage (from http://www.writing.upenn.edu/~afilreis/88/cage-quotes.html).

The Cast

Artistic Producer	Andrew Blackburn
Author	Tan Twan Eng
Sound Design	Warren Burt
Images	Catherine Schieve
Sound Collection	Catherine Schieve & Azam Sulong
Readers	Warren Burt
	Zaharul Laillidin B. Saidon
	Clare Chan
	Loanameg Lloyd Daim
	Alwin Wong Ru Kiet
	Bryan Earon Morris
	Kenny Lee Vui Keong
Dance	Nur Nabila Michael Lung Bt Abdullah
Wayang Kulit	Mohd Hassan Abdullah
Piano	Stephen Whittington
Flute	Jean Penny
Gambus	Mohd Nizam Attan

(CAGE101 Programme booklet, 2013)

APPENDIX 8: DVD contents

Videos of
The Curse of the Screaming Serunai
Synergies I for flute and electronics

Audio recording of
Two improvisations