

Performance and Absolute Music Composition Design Based on Experimentation of Sundanese Flute

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Abstract. The act of breathing symbolizes human life and the preservation of its existence. Music, serving as a symbol of auditory influence in human life, also exerts an impact and persuasion on individuals, contributing to the construction of their character. The portrayal of human life and auditory influence serves as the foundation for the creation of an absolute musical composition show, grounded in the experimentation of breath patterns on the Sundanese flute. The method of creation adopts experimental theory to compose absolute music devoid of predetermined aesthetic perspectives. This method is also directed towards the creation of therapeutic music, aiming to provide a contemplative terminal deposit for its listeners.

Keywords: Absolute music, experimentation, breath, flute, audio spatial

1 Introduction

The concept of absolute music, as delineated by Manin in Bonds [1], is divided into two primary categories. First, music that is considered pure within the contexts of beauty and uniqueness as an art form. Subsequently, as articulated by Richard Wagner, absolute music is interpreted as a form of music that is isolated, detached from external influences such as business and industry, and rendered sterile from non-artistic influences [1].

The novelty of absolute music is constructed relying on a hermeneutic perspective, as opposed to aesthetics and listener perception. Absolute music leads to a transformation from philosophical ideas into aesthetic discourse [2]. This underpins the composer's endeavor to experiment by transposing the philosophy of life, symbolized by breath, into an absolute musical expression. The philosophy of life, symbolized by breath, is then transformed into music that characterizes humans as beings easily influenced by auditory stimuli. Additionally, music becomes a defining characteristic of human communication through audio, rather than written means. The influence of audio, both conventional and technological, is more readily absorbed by humans [3]. The low literacy levels also emerge as a significant factor; this data is supported by PISA, indicating that reading intensity ranks 62 out of 72 countries, making audio more appealing [4,5].

The human auditory system begins to form as early as 4 or 5 weeks into human development. The functioning of the auditory system becomes nearly perfected around the 20th week, establishing it as the first sensory organ to form and operate almost flawlessly in the early stages before birth [5]. From a humanistic perspective, as elucidated by Jean-Paul Sartre, it is

posited that humans are most susceptible to influence through audio, subsequently leading to alterations and the shaping of their psyche [6].

The conceptual framework underpinning the development of this method revolves around utilizing the breath of wind for the creation of dialogical and therapeutic music. This feasibility stems from the slow, melodic, and melismatic rhythmic qualities of the Sundanese flute, which have the potential to provide therapeutic benefits to human health from the perspectives of music psychology and musicology [7]. This forms the basis for the premise guiding the development of a method for creating absolute music based on breath patterns using the Sundanese flute as a medium. The breath, symbolizing life, continues to exert influence and undergo construction. The intended influence pertains to the social environment of the individual. To convey this impression, the composer reinforces the composition by incorporating a surrounded effect (sound emerging from the surroundings). This effect is achieved through the application of audio spatial techniques in the composition [8].

2 Method

This method focuses on creating an absolute musical composition using the Sundanese flute, inspired by breath patterns as a symbol of life. The creation process adopts an experimental approach, where breath patterns are translated into musical phrases without being influenced by existing aesthetic norms. These breath patterns represent human life, explored through breathing techniques on the Sundanese flute. In addition to artistic expression, the composition also aims to provide a therapeutic effect, creating a contemplative atmosphere that offers space for reflection and healing through music.

3 Research and Discussion

Everett [11] delineates several approaches employed in composition within the context of music. First, there is the concept of transfer, which involves the process of quoting elements from one medium to another, such as borrowing techniques or elements from the Balinese flute to the Sundanese flute, or vice versa. Secondly, there is the syncretic process, which entails the amalgamation of diverse aspects from various mediums to explore new possibilities or the development of musical styles. Lastly, there is synthesis, interpreted as the creation of a new form or character based on the transformative process of two disparate elements. For instance, the use of a 12-note equal temperament scale in a chromatic gamelan would introduce a new character [11].

The composer employs all three approaches to generate ideas, concepts, and textual as well as contextual musical frameworks. The creative process involves combining traditional Sundanese instruments with Western musical idioms and aspects. This amalgamation is intended for the exploration of tonal, polytonal, atonal elements, and is further developed through the use of free counterpoint. The composer will illustrate the musical depiction related to this working process, which is subsequently complemented by a dramatic representation [9].

Hypothesis testing and causal identification are systematically conducted through several stages. The process commences with the formulation of hypotheses, identification of variables, and the selection of a control group related to the variables to be manipulated. This is followed by randomization, observation, and a double-blind procedure. Subsequent steps involve the

application of statistical methods to measure the differences between this work and previous works, aiming to diminish similarities. Replication of the experiment is then undertaken to ensure the quality of the results. The experimental outcomes are generalized to align with trends, laws, or principles applicable in the relevant situation. In conclusion, this process adheres to ethical principles, such as obtaining consent from the owners of the works used as sources or informants, and treating other subjects with respect and dignity [2].

The stages outlined in the theory are adopted for the creation of this musical work, including observation, exploration, composition, and further exploration. Observation involves the collection of data from several objects under study, which will serve as the creative material. The breath and the flute medium will be thoroughly examined to compile data related to the techniques and medium used. Subsequently, data will be obtained based on observations, learning, and recording findings on the materials discovered. Observational data is extracted from the instruments and playing techniques used as the medium for music composition, namely the Sundanese flute, Balinese flute, and the Western flute. The results will reveal various patterns of play and specific musical notes.

Exploration takes place once the foundational data has been collected. Technical processing is employed for the exploration of composition, resulting in harmony in chords, modulation, time signatures, and rhythm. The subsequent step involves the arrangement of the composition based on the outcomes of observation and exploration. The created work, derived from these sources, is then evaluated to address shortcomings and refine the piece artistically through a rehearsal process.

The perceptual impact of social environmental influences is diffusive and randomly dispersed around the individual. Moreover, these influences vary for each person, emphasizing the need for a surrounding sound impression to depict this phenomenon. To achieve this, the composer applies the theory of audio spatiality in the method of composing this work. To create a more immersive listener experience, manipulation of sound sources in a space is required [10]. The audio spatial process commences with room modeling to recognize the acoustic characteristics of the space. Once these characteristics are identified, audio processing is undertaken to achieve the intended effects. Audio processing involves the application of various effects in the composition, such as panning, delay, reverb, and others, in appropriate proportions [11]. Audio is processed using binaural techniques, mimicking natural human hearing and adjusted to the created audio content. This process also necessitates the positioning of speakers for a three-dimensional effect [1]. The process can be further enhanced by moving the position of the performers continuously to create a diffusive sound impression. To ensure effective perception of these movements, the staging concept and floor patterns are intentionally designed to accommodate these transitions.

The performers' movement is executed consistently and repetitively to create an impression of life's continuous recurrence. Despite being performed consistently, the variations in musical tempo and walking pace convey the sense that life is dynamic. The constructed floor pattern forms a circle surrounding the audience, intended to replace the movement of speakers with a dramatic approach to sound source relocation. The distilled movements and footsteps impart a sense of the passage of time experienced uniquely by each individual. This performance aims not to present an atmosphere of absurdity to the audience but rather to showcase how individuals navigate such absurd situations [12].

4 Conclusion

A work of art is created as a medium for conveying messages and expressing emotions by the artist. Therefore, honest works emerge from the empirical experiences or natural responses of an artist to their social environment. However, a good and structured method is required to create a quality piece and to reproduce the creation with the same structure. The method formulated by the artist for the design of the performance and absolute music composition involves the artist's responses and readings of personal life and the people around them. Life and its responses become raw material processed through the development of a new artistic creation method.

The method devised involves several theories, including experimentation and audio spatiality, supported by the enhancement of the technical skills of the artist, artistic knowledge, aesthetic experiences, and academic studies. This created work is expected to provide a representation of life transposed into a musical phenomenon. Additionally, the work is anticipated to offer a contemplative experience and open a dialectical space with the audience to gain new insights for the artist, both for refining the work and expanding knowledge.

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