
FESTIVALS AND SYMPOSIA

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COPY&PASTE
MINE, YOURS, OURS UNDER
DISCUSSION
The 23rd International Student Symposium of DVSM e.V.
Institute for Musicology, University of Vienna, 9–12 October 2009

The 23rd International Student Symposium was held at the Institute for Musicology of the University of Vienna from 9 to 12 October 2009. The event called *Copy&Paste – Mine, Yours, Ours under Discussion* was important in many aspects: as a continuation of the student symposium tradition, a practice introduced as far back as 1986; then, as a “centre” of the latest, very versatile research conducted by students of musicology throughout

the world, and finally, as an occasion for numerous interdisciplinary dialogues resulting from the many different approaches to musical practices.

The polyvalent title of the symposium was inspiring for many young musicologists, and consequently the multiplicity of works and subject areas at the symposium presented the most recent results of the research worldwide. Among the treated fields, the following topics can be singled out: copyright law, quotation in music, the concept of identity and its play of dialogue with opposite categories of human experience (the past and the future, the known and the unknown, the adopted and the new, one’s own and someone else’s, etc.).

The first panel discussion – *Copy* – again brought up issues referring to copyright law and its application in music. The introductory lecture of this session was given by Britta Hanke, a representative of the German GEMA association (Gesellschaft für musikalische Aufführungs- und mechanische Vervielfältigungsrechte). In her paper, entitled *History and Practice of Asserting Copyright through GEMA*, Britta Hanke raises the following groups of questions: if and when a personal creation is possible, who decides on it, which elements are allowed to be taken from musical works by other authors and how they are to be quoted in one’s own compositions, how to protect one’s own work and what

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“to protect” means? The paper by Caroline Neußer, *The Legal and the Musicological Work – A Comparison*, was a logical link to the introductory lecture. The author deals with the issues of understanding a musical piece from the legal and musicological point of view. The subject of the last work presented within the first session focuses on popular music, that is the musical and cultural challenges popular music is facing in the modern music industry (Alexander Forstner: *The New Music Business and Its Consequences*).

The papers presented in the second session – *Paste* – deal with the issue of “borrowing” in music. Jan Giffhorn, author of the work *Copy, Loop and Repetition – A Tautological Explanation*, tells how the terms copy, loop and repetition mutually define, redefine and inevitably complement each other. According to the author, using tautology is the only way to explain “generally accepted” terms and bring them closer to some hidden, subconsciously crossed lines in the use of the above three terms. Daniel Tiemeyer’s work *Compositorial Memory – Ludwig van Beethoven’s Late Style Work in the Context of his Ancestors* focuses on musical “strategies” of quotations in music, while Milan Milojković’s work *Viennese Heritage in Serbian Music and Art: Kornelije Stanković (1831-1865) on the Paintings by Stevan Todorović (1832-1925)* explores the ways in which the elements of Viennese Biedermeier were assimilated in Todorović’s portraits of Kornelije Stanković. The author additionally notes that certain “moments” in Todorović’s iconographic presentation of Stanković were converted from *other people’s* into *our own*. In her work *When Opera Parodizes Itself – Aspects of Italian Opera Parody in 18th and 19th Century*, Elisabeth Pözl-Hofer presents the key characteristics of the 18th and 19th century opera parody through copy&paste practice.

The third panel discussion – *Mine* – introduced works with the subject of *personal*

and *cultural* identity. The papers first dealt with the identity of *being* – an individual identifying himself through the consciousness of continuity between what he used to be, what he is today and what he might become (Ivana Petković: *Music ‘Truths’ by Claude Debussy*; Steffen Rother: *Dream or Fake – Tan Dun’s Marco Polo on a Journey to Himself*). Through direct processes of communication and alienation, the individual comes into contact with other subjects, so the dialectical game, started within the sphere of personal identity, continues in the domain of the “average identity” of a group of subjects or of the plural *we* (Tom Wagner: *“We Are All Griots Now”: [Re]Examining Tradition in the Cultural Production of Les Ballets Africains*; Dominic Larue: *Performing [in] the City – The City as a Stage of Musical Construction of Identity. An Explorative Journey*).

It appears that one of the most interesting sessions of this symposium – which is surely the viewpoint of the author of these lines – was the one dedicated to the *Yours* category. This group included two papers: *Traditional Chinese Music for Western Audience* by Ying Liu and *“The Practice of Quoting Everyday Life”: Contemporary Israeli Popular Music Revisiting Zionist Culture* by Oded Erez. The first paper treats concert practice involving traditional Chinese music intended for a Western audience, while the other one focuses on the role of music in the process of identification and innovation in contemporary Israel.

A special group consisted of papers dedicated to the *Ours* category. In her paper *Ethel Smyth’s “March of the Women”*, Marleen Hoffmann concerned herself with the issues of reception and methods of distribution of the work declared in recent years the “hymn” of the women’s movement. Didi Neidhart, who wrote the text titled *It’s a Bastard’s World – The Pop Music Principle as Copy&Paste between Politics, Aesthetics and Lots of Productive Misunderstandings*, starts

from the assumption that each element bearing the attribute *our*, is also bound to contain the elements of *someone else's*. Speaking primarily of the popular music stage in the USA as a representative example of crossroads of diversified influences and ideas, the author tried to point to the possible lines between the things considered *mine* and those belonging to *someone else*. Each of the presented papers inspired quite a lively, interesting and provocative discussion, bearing witness to a large number of various research courses in musicology; and, more importantly, it encouraged each participant to look for the links of these various approaches to his own reflections on/in music.

The symposium was accompanied by several workshops. In the one titled *Work in Progress* the students had an opportunity for frank discussion about their latest academic work (such as bachelor's, master's or doctoral theses), and their ideas related to some future projects. Thus, all participants were able to gain a wider notion of different academic traditions. In the *Reflection on Listening and Notating Music* workshop participants used audio examples and reviews to discuss the categories *one's own* and *alien*, as well as *one's own* and *someone else's* perception of music. The third workshop, *Copy&Paste*, was organized in such a way to include a theoretical platform (a review of musical avant-garde development and the articles *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music* and *Plunderphonics, or Audio Piracy as a Compositional Prerogative*), a practical part (a demonstration with audio tools copy&paste, Apple sound effects, Emagics Logic-Audio, Freeware Audacity, interactive and individual work with sound collage), and a group discussion on topical issues with reference to copyright law applied in the music industry and problems with licences issued by the Creative Commons organization.

Owing to the systematic and highly professional engagement of the organizing committee, we can say that the 23rd Interna-

tional Student Symposium was very well prepared and, altogether, quite a success. The works presented at this event will soon be available to a broader scientific audience in a collection of papers to be published in English and German.

Translated by Goran Kapetanović