



International Vocal Arts Workshop

Jeunesses Musicales Croatia International Cultural Centre, Grožnjan

Symposium

Performing the Other : Interacting with the Unknown

29 May 2016

Koncertna dvorana Kaštel, Grožnjan, Croatia

14:00 Opening Remarks

Jane McMahan, Director, International Vocal Arts Workshop

14:15 Papers

Tanja Plešivčnik

Facing, Feeling and Contemplating the Otherness

Amy Olson

“The Other” and the Bilingual Education Debate in the United States

Derek Rookhuizen

Same/Other and the Building Blocks that Link All Living Beings

Kimmy Szeto

Perceptions of Difference in the Musical Work

15:30 Reflections | Questions and Answers

16:00 Pause

16:30 Presentations

Autumn Brown

Attraction and Aversion in Performance

Selena McMahan

Performing With – And As – Another Species

Carlos Pascual

The Self and Others: A Live Presentation

18:30 Pause

19:00 Presentations

Boris Magdalenc

Presentation of Hang: The Sound Sculpture

International Vocal Arts Workshop Participants Perform Work in Progress

20:30 Dinner

International Vocal Arts Workshop Symposium

Director, IVAW	Jane McMahan
Symposium Coordinator	Kimmy Szeto
Symposium Regional Representative	Tanja Plešivčnik
Production Assistant	Anne Monique Pace
Presenters	Tanja Plešivčnik, Amy Olson, Derek Rookhuizen, Kimmy Szeto, Autumn Brown, Selena McMahan, Carlos Pascual, Boris Magdalenc
Participants, IVAW	Uran Apak, Jessica Edgar, Janelle Hutten, Amy Olson, Anne Monique Pace, Jermaine Rowe

Opening Remarks

Jane McMahan has been teaching voice at Barnard College, Columbia University, for many years. This is her ninth season leading the International Vocal Arts Workshop. She first came to Grožnjan many years ago to study at Jeunesses Musicales with Andrea von Ramm, and she designed the International Vocal Arts Workshop to emulate the spirit of Andrea's vibrant and unconventional approach—one that made creative ideas flow and encouraged artistic interchange. Her CD, *Mediterranean Crosscurrents*, focuses on vocal and piano music of Manuel de Falla and Maurice Ravel and on Sephardic songs.

Facing, Feeling and Contemplating the Otherness

In general view, aesthetic experience incorporates a kind of contemplation (mainly regarded as disinterested) of an object (be it human, nature, environment or everyday objects and phenomena) that requires some openness of a subject to an object, in order to enable absorption of its sensual qualities and free play of our mental powers. The result is a type of feeling or judgment of taste. Aesthetic experience, on the other hand, also embraces a very important phenomenological dimension of experiencing, connecting to and understanding the world in us and outside. Otherness and its connotations are all mental constructs that affects how we perceive, how we judge. We should not let them turn us away from perception and contemplation that might reveal to us other faces of reality and possibly encourage empathy for others. We will search for the grounds for how aesthetics helps cultivate ethics, from Emmanuel Kant to Arnold Berleant, and to buddhist origins on mindfulness and contemplation.

Tanja Plešivčnik first studied geography at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, Slovenia and Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Portugal. After earning her degree she enrolled in the PhD program for Philosophy and Theory of Visual Culture at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Primorska in Koper, Slovenia, where she is currently researching the field of environmental art and aesthetics. Within her present study she has published five scientific papers and presented her research at several international conferences around Europe. She is the recipient of “Innovative scheme for the co-financing of PhD studies to promote social challenges.” She is currently the president of Društvo KVART and is developing the creative community project MobaLopa. Tanja also regularly organizes events, including “Otroške kvartarije 2013,” “Library under Treetops in Isola 2013,” and other exhibition projects.

“The Other” and the Bilingual Education Debate in the United States

Amy Olson earned dual bachelor’s degrees in applied linguistics and classical vocal performance from Tufts University and the New England Conservatory of Music, and is currently a master’s degree candidate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages at Teachers College, Columbia University. Her research investigates the interface between language use and language acquisition in immersion-based bilingual education programs.

Same/Other and the Building Blocks that Link All Living Beings

We constantly make distinctions to separate us from others – race, gender, species... But biological science shows that we are more the same, right down to the cellular and intracellular level, than we are different. What implications should this hold for performance? – **Derek Rookhuizen**

Perceptions of Difference in the Musical Work

The criteria for a work of music are often intuitive. What about the criteria for different performances to be considered of the same work? Where do we draw the line? Should there be lines? Can there be lines? We will examine the aspects in which musical expressions can differ, and the resulting descriptions of these versions in relation to our intuitive conception of the musical work.

Kimmy Szeto challenges the conventional conception of the musical work through performance, composition, teaching, and scholarship. His arrangements of Schumann, Wagner, Janáček and Schoenberg are described as “illuminating” by the *New York Times*, as he performs “alchemy” on symphonic masterpieces, on staff paper, for chamber ensembles, as well as on operatic arias, on the fly, for singers with him at the piano. As Assistant Professor at Baruch College, City University of New York, he designs the next generation digital knowledge organization infrastructure, and can be seen teaching, speaking, and publishing in specialized forums.

Attraction and Aversion in Performance

I would like to give a short talk on the relationship between the nature of story / cultural storytelling, and the problem of difference. This has a lot to do with “centering the voice of the other”. It’s hard to center the voice of the other in performance, if the “other” produces a response of aversion in the audience, but we know that otherness also produces a response of attraction, so this raises questions regarding how to craft a performance that produces the Attraction response, without exotifying the other.

Autumn Brown is a mother, community organizer, writer, and artist who leads organizational and strategic workshops with community-based and social movement organizations. A graduate of Sarah Lawrence College and a former student at Oxford and New York’s General Theological Seminary, Autumn lives in the Avon Hills of Minnesota with her partner, three brilliant children, and a large, ridiculous dog. She looks forward to coming to Grožnjan: “I would like to develop a performance in which artist students perform the ‘Other’ in themselves or in a fellow student after intensive interviewing and reflection.”

Performing With – And As – Another Species

We are fascinated by the similarities and differences between ourselves and those of other species. How are these translated into performance both by humans ‘becoming’ the other and members of other species taught/encouraged to ‘become’ more human?

Selena McMahan is an actress, clown, teacher, and director based in Paris. A graduate of the École Jacques Lecoq, she works as a professional hospital clown with Le Rire Médecin, teaches with Association Peekaboo, performs with and is the artistic director of Bleu Jaune Rouge (www.bleujaunerouge.com), and is a volunteer artist with Clowns Without Borders and the current President of Clowns Without Borders USA. At Grožnjan she will be leading workshops in physical theatre and masque.

The Self and the Others

The construction of a persona, from the rough blue print we get at birth, is not very different from the construction of a character on stage. Pascual's playful proposal is to open within ourselves a true parliament of voices and, at least in our creative crafts, get rid of the dictatorship of that strictly defined persona while building an ethical structure than would engulf all our shapes. One of the main results from this will be a wider spectrum of empathy for otherness.

Carlos Pascual was born in Mexico City in 1964. Mostly self-taught, Pascual never aimed at obtaining an institutional degree but did assorted studies in film, literature and theater between Mexico City and Los Angeles, California, unintentionally becoming a professional writer and theater and film maker while doing diverse types of jobs, from construction worker in Boston, to security guard in Los Angeles, casino PR in Las Vegas to vice-president of a foreign exchange Chinese company based in Hong Kong. Pascual now lives in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where he writes and publishes in *Objektiv*, *Literatura*, and *Lud Literatura*, and has founded and manages the Pocket Teater Studio, a small independent stage. He has just published his first Slovenian book: *O Služkinjah, Visokih Petah in Izgubljenih Priložnostih*.

Presentation of Hang: The Sound Sculpture

Boris Magdalenc will give a presentation on an interesting contemporary instrument from Switzerland called Hang (or Hang drum). Over the years he had collaborated with various Slovenian and foreign artists and played concerts and shows in Slovenia and across Europe. One of his passions is also busking in the streets of cities, as he believes those are the most fun and challenging venues to play on. At the moment he is focusing mostly on his project: SKARABEJ – Music for Hang and Violin and produces music for theatre, documentaries and dance pieces. You can see his profile online: <http://www.facebook.com/duoskarabej>

Upcoming Events

The International Vocal Arts Workshop presents two musical programs in June in Grožnjan:

4.6.16 20h Koncertna dvorana Kaštel – Concert of Classical Songs, Operatic Arias, and Broadway

5.6.16 20h Piazza della loggia – Cabaret!

We thank the staff of the International Cultural Centre of Jeunesses Musicales Croatia in Grožnjan for its support of the International Vocal Arts Workshop Symposium.

More information: www.hgm.hr/groznjan.htm || www.artsynergy.net

