



Dialogue Research 01

Notes on the first contribution by Samu sent on Nov. 22. 2019

My plan was to react somehow of my own way to the impression I had when I met the painting of Pehbowen on their porch. The painting was relatively fresh probably, because you could see some traces of paint on the floor.

Pehbowen told me about the picture that she was very emotional, sort of angry when she made that. I did not ask about further details, but I saw this intense emotion on the canvas and on the surrounding environment. The picture has a strong formal aspect. It has a horizontal division in the middle of the canvas, that creates a red (lower) and a blue (upper) part.

Of course it is only how I read it, it is obvious, that the blue is a sort of a background, and red is a layer in front of it. Anyway, I had the impression of this two layer at the very first moment. One can have several associations of the image including sky, fire, sea, clouds or even flying fishes jumping out of the sea. And since nature is everywhere, and its presence and rules are omnipotent on the island (actually everywhere in the world), it is pretty easy to see the painting as a creative formation of images of nature brilliantly expressed by the sensitive artist.

I had this image in my mind, and let my unconscious digesting that. My eyes and ears were open, if I can find a suitable material for answering this impression.

Shortly before we left the island, one night I was riding by the Hotel of Pehbowen. She was there with a lot of friends, having a party, I just saw it through the window, but it seemed that they are having a good time with friends, young and energetic people.

Almost two month later, I was invited to a friend, Robert Wahorn for celebrating his birthday at his carpentry workshop with old friends in a partly industrial, but still nice green area outside Budapest. In one of the rooms there was standing a piano. It was totally broken and out of tune, of course only compared to normal western piano tuning. I started to experience with it, and somehow my friends came around me, and we had a fantastic time improvising, singing and dancing even on the top of the piano. I had a chance to experience with the several possibilities of the instrument. I found a lot of nice sounds that I could use for creating the first answer in the dialogue research.

Piano as an iconic object of western art, and the condition of this instrument reminded me to all of the cultural changes in the western world, and all these can be nicely paired with the damaged heritage of Lanyu.



I went back next day to the workshop and started to work on small, partly improvised etudes based on my experience of the previous day in correlation with my experience in Lanyu and the painting of Pehbowen. For one piece I used the sound of the gigantic industrial fan-system of the workshop.

I recorded everything with my Zoom H4N putting the machine inside the piano.

I was working with two basic ideas related to some parts of the vocal tradition of Lanyu:

- two pitches, a higher and a lower in variation in an approximate major 2nd distance from each other, sometimes within an additional melodic context
- A living and changing chain of hits or other percussive impulses without mechanic repetition, but in a sort of a regular distance.

Since I knew, that I make this music for Pehbowen I also referred (tried to) to another common experience I had with her. During our workshop at the Lantau High-school on August 22. I participated Pehbowen's workshop. For some exercises she used a string quartet recording with some post-minimalistic composition with very straightforward positive energy and a vivid pulse. I wanted to do something that partly has this kind of intensive smoothness and energetic vibe.

I took all my recordings and started to compose with this material based on the double layered nature of the original painting.

The result is a 14:23 minutes long audio track with six inner movements, all these can be grouped to three pair-movements.

Here is a short analysis of the movements:

I. (Waves) 0:00 - 2:26

A hit followed by a long resonance with an additional "after-hit" in some parts with a high single pitch, changing to a higher second note, extending into a more complex after-hit ending with a single flash-back of the first high pitch. From the second minute less attack and longer resonance hits with additional after-hits of the original high pitch. Followed by a silence.

Movement articulates some sort of waves hitting the shore, as well as the rhythmic clapping of the Tao community when they gather for the *Mikariyag*. The two high pitches also referring to the traditional pitch changing of this.

II. (Song 1) 02:30 - 5:30

An ostinato of an approximative major second, in complimentary rhythm with percussive noises (releasing the keys) are building up an ostinato-like layer. The interval is again referential to Tao tradition, but used in a western-style, meanwhile the eroded sound of the instrument i refers to some sort of new platform of both cultures. an additional layer is the two-line song in a higher register on a four tone model with one additional "inharmonic" sound. the four identifiably different pitches are close to the upper four pitches of a minor pentachord, where the fundamental is the higher pitch of the other, lower layer. upper layer ends with a repeating hit on the highest note, movement ends with a long decay of the sustained sound of the lower layer.

Pair 1: Movement I - II are forming the first pair-movements, where I is referring to the blue layer of the original painting, and II to the red one.

III. (Song 2) 5:30 - 7:44

It is a kind of a combination or synthesis of I and II, where a hit like percussive sound gives a not steady beat, and a higher register melody of a minor trichord - strongly organized around the first and second pitch, could be a reference to the *Anood* or other vocal tradition of the island.

IV. (Industrializing) 7:45 - 10:30

After the strong sound effect of starting the industrial fan, a much more intense and faster version of the sound material of movement I is appearing. Hits, and high after-hits strongly fighting with the oppression of the external industrial noise. An image that refers to the relationship between traditional Tao life, and the several external cultural invasions. It could refer to the intensity of a Typhoon as well, what I experienced a bit during the field research, but I think Typhoon is an inherent part of the life-routine on the island, so I would not support this association. At 9:27 the Fan slowly starts sinking, the hits and the after-hit high pitches accompanying this process.

Pair 2: III. and IV. are a mirrored movement-pair of I-and II, where the melody of III connects it strongly with II, and the repeated hits, and high after-hits connecting IV. to I. The intervention of the industrial fan is a new element, that gives a new dimension to the two pair pieces, and puts the first pair in another historic context, and makes the first pair pre-industrial. in movement IV. the external industry occupies the territories of the natural character of I-II (summarized in III).

V/a. (Loom of the history) 10:46 - 12:35

A repeated rhythmic loop-like phrase of mechanical noises with one development on the top of it (could refer to the two layers of the original painting): After a few repetition a single, lower range note appears. It changes throughout the piece a bit. Overall It is introduced in two ways a muted and a sustained version changing periodically, referring to some sort of natural changing of elements, seasons, etc, but also muted string could refer to an external intervention.

V/b. (Convolution) 12:35 - 13:23

The single note disappears, and a long sustained resonance takes over its place. The mechanical noise changes and starts to develop in growing phrases. Phrases are always getting longer and more intense, with a talking-like character. It reminds me to a lamenting or complaining spoken text, when someone tells you what harming injustices happened to him. If I go further with this association, than I would say, that it is complaining about the introduction of the external industry. This part reflects on the intense “jumping” red figures of the original painting as well.

VI. (Song 3) 12:35 - 14:24

The sound of the accelerating and evolving song. It has two layers one is the song played in high register the other is a rhythmic counterpoint played on different clicks and hits in complementary rhythms to the song.

The song starts with a single pitch (not literally, because of the tuning circumstances of the instrument, where each key creates a more complex resonance where more strings are de-tuned slightly apart from each other), followed by a line of three pitches (slice of a pentatonic scale referring to *Ayani*), followed by a line of four pitches (extending the scale to a western type diatonic-like tetrachord), extending towards a strongly eroded chromatic-like space with a fifth note creating for my ears very natural microtonal spreads. Song ends with a three-pitch melody variation, a “phrygian” trichord with western terminology. The song has a lamenting character, meanwhile the clicks and hits in the background are referring to the movement V. and creating a post-industrial atmosphere, or even creating surrounding community for the lonely song by bract stomping and claps.

Pair 3: The final pair-movement of the piece are still using the same elements introduced in the previous movements (hit referring to the collective clapping with some sustained resonance, and different song-like melodic lines) meanwhile it is also a culmination and conclusion of the preceding actions.