

The final sixth chapter “Vowels and emotions” discuss the ability of both speech and music to express emotional meaning. The author mentions possibilities of vowels to deliver sound i.e. emotion, and consonants delivering meaning i.e. intellect. At this point in *The importance of vowels in music education* the ideas conveyed in the previous book on the accents and this one on the vowels, merge. Namely, the accents hold more variety in vowels than in consonants. Vowels reveal local differences, the expression of emotions, the social stature and economic state of the speaker. Music activates emotions because, while perceiving and performing, the endocrinology, immune and neurology system are engaged. The author notices that singing strengthens the immune system and escalates endorphin, which reduces stress and tenseness. This fact is especially important and has to be emphasized, because unfortunately singing together in the form of choir activities in schools and both professional and amateur choirs is being reduced, leading to almost extinguishing choir singing as a mandatory subject in elementary schools.

The importance of vowels in music education by Milena Petrović opens numerous questions about the relationship between music and language through studying the origins, nature, usage and the role of vowels. Music pedagogy is a science which exists by virtue of its interdisciplinarity, enabling the author to freely shed light on vowels from different angles: acoustics, linguistics (phonetics and semantics), genetics, linguistics, music theory, cognitive musicology and psychology as well as music pedagogy.

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18th International conference: Music and image in cultural, social and political discourse, Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury (UK), 9–12 July 2018

There are few international music/musical institutions, organizations, or associations that may boast of a tradition or reputation comparable to that of RIDIM (Répertoire International d'Iconographie Musicale). An important legacy of the association for promoting, supporting, and managing various projects concerning the relationship of visual culture and music, dance, and dramatic arts includes its scholarly conferences, which were initially organized at the Research Center for Music Iconography in New York (1973–1980) and then in cities across the world (Paris, Hamburg, Salvador (Bahia, Brazil), Rome, Istanbul, Columbus (Ohio, USA), Saint Petersburg, and Athens). Last year's meeting took place in Canterbury (Kent, England, UK), a small university town in southeast England, in the county of Kent. Under the metaphorical patronage of that town's

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monumental cathedral, Saint Augustine's Abbey, and Chaucer's tales, the conference saw some productive and inspired presentations and discussions. The programme committee was faced with a difficult task concerning the selection process. It considered almost a hundred submissions, accepted a little over 50 of them, while the conference eventually featured a total of 33 scholarly presentations. "The depth and breadth of the selected papers provide a framework for multi-fold and inter- and transdisciplinary discourse, as much as promoting the intellectual examination and exchange of topics linked to the impact of music and image within a broad span of cultural, social, and political discourses".¹

The 18th conference fully deserved its international prefix, especially in terms of the countries represented (England, Uruguay, Germany, USA, Portugal, New Zealand, Serbia, Czech Republic, Australia, Wales, Mexico, France, Israel, Lithuania, Spain, Taiwan, etc.). The meeting's international character was also underscored by the selection of topics and problems treated at the conference, seeing how their ethnic provenance, local/global positioning, and methodological variations sought to demagnetize the needle of the compass with which we identify our 'place in the world'. An array of mosaic structures came before our minds and senses. In an analysis of

Baraka and *Samsara*, films by Ron Fricke, we had a chance to see and hear a 'miniature world' of its own; in photographs of Valkyries and Rhinemaidens we could see some 'beautiful subjects/objects'; caricatures saying 'a thousand words', sometimes also satirically, re-examined what is textually ineffable/hidden; the pictorial properties of an antique vase illustrated the ambiguity of Athenian political discourse at its turning point between tyranny and democracy; we were shown how music could be used as a lethal weapon by a dictatorship and resistance movement alike; an 18th-century frieze from Paraguay was discussed as a poster for an identity and ideology; a set of photographs by Sipho Gongxeka was analysed for their (de)composing of masculinity and rebellion, through the bifocal lens of Kwaito singers and gang members; we observed the making of a new vision of Spain in Goya's *El peleele*, as staged by Picasso and the *Ballets russes*; the work of a number of Eastern European artists in the Cold War context of the 'Prague Spring' and their impact on contemporary trends in the West showed us the potential of repressed/dissident images; the involvement of music in shaping the image of an economically resurgent Japan was demonstrated by an analysis of anime; the global significance of the RiDIM Database in international research in music iconography was duly discussed; analysing visual expressions of individual sexuality in the *Etude* music magazine, we discovered hidden messages in its primary pedagogical tissue, as well as many other thought-provoking approaches and thematisations along between music and image.

¹ Antonio Baldassarre, "Some Thoughts on Music and Image in Cultural, Social, and Political Discourse", in: Association RiDIM 18th International Conference: Music and Image in Cultural, Social, and Political Discourse, Canterbury, 2018, 5.

On the one hand, the thematic profile of the conference set by the organizers was universal in character, necessarily related to RiDIM's line of work, but on the other hand, it also pointed to the threefold capillarity of music's interference with image in discourses of culture, society, and politics. Of course, this does not mean that some of the previous meetings' foci were abandoned or suppressed in the discussions (the critical method of an object's image, music/body/stage, advancing research in music iconography, the relationship between East and West, power and repression, etc.). The added value of this conference was reflected in its efforts to establish the significance of the visual and its rightful place in the systemic framework of the study of music. "Taken in context, discourse on the visual since the 1990s has not fundamentally altered the significance of the visual as such, but, rather, it has brought the visual's inherent significance to culture and society into the foreground once again. This paradigm is exemplarily expressed in the proclamation of a 'pictorial turn', as much as in the notion of the 'The Return of the Images', (to quote the title of an essay by Gottfried Boehm), giving rise to the assumption of a 'third Copernican revolution', in which the visual itself is treated as the meaningful object of rigorously intellectual reflections, i.e. as the 'complex interplay between visibility, apparatus, institutions, discourses, bodies and figurality'".² Apparently, it was precisely this complex interaction, mentioned above, that formed the focus of most of the papers presented at the con-

² Ibid., 9.

ference, whether case studies, studies of particular problems, theoretical discussions, comparative overviews, interdisciplinary explorations, or historiographical surveys.

The quality of all three keynotes justified their selection: "Worth a Thousand Words" by David Owen Norris, "The Democratic Turn in Ancient Athens, and its Impact on Musical Imagery: The Cup G 138 (Louvre)" by Silvain Perrot, and "The Musical Iconography of a Dictatorship: Uruguay, 1973–1985" by Marita Fornaro Bordolli. Particularly captivating was Norris's illustrative, vivid, and imaginative talk. Integrating his experiences as a performer, i.e. pianist, and composer, as well as the charm of a TV author and host, Norris found a seductive but professionally well-grounded way to present all the nuances in the semantic play of sound, absent verballity, and image. Choosing Frank Bridge's *Miniature Pastorales* for piano, Norris gave himself an opportunity to perform segments from those pieces on the piano, simultaneously commenting on and interpreting his well-chosen examples. The multimedia character of his talk turned out as the only adequate approach to Bridge's paradigmatic piece, a setting of engravings by Margaret Kemp-Welch featuring an array of allusions to 'natural' innocence, lost in the Great War, and militant pacifism. In his talk, Norris detected programmatic elements, hidden in the illustrations, in various musical parameters. It was interesting to note how the same principle (introducing an image into a configuration of sound) appears, albeit in retrograde, in Francis Poulenc's *Les Soirées des Nazelles*, where the composer sought to portray

his friends by means of improvised musical devices (music shaping images). Including this reverse effect in his analysis Norris highlighted the fluidity of meanings and manifestations of sound and image in the artistic play of changing/exchanging discourses. If an image is worth a thousand words, what is the worth, in characters, of a skilfully woven texture made of notes?

The other two keynotes focused on political reflections in artistic tendencies/expressions. Sylvain Perrot discussed the principle of ambiguity reflected in the pictorial poetics of ancient Athenian democracy. Why did artists include ambiguous codes in the figural style of pottery used for presenting various aspects of 'sociality' in a newly created political order? What were the functions and symbolism of aulos players, the dithyramb, and Dionysus? Perrot views the pendulum swing in expression or 'reading of the strokes' as an effort to mediate between the respective discourses of the representatives of the oligarchy and radical democrats. A similar, 'ediating' role is

played by music and its visual manifestations in the struggle between the regime and the opposition in Bordolli's study. Both studies provided yet another proof of the power of music and image as media endowed with a high potential in terms of representation and propaganda.

It is also worth noting that the conference included an innovative approach to film music research. Positing the relationship between music and image on the basis of reflexive dialectics, Igor Radeta and Tijana Popović Mladenović offered the theoretical conception and notion of *musimage* as an expression of the inter-media relating and synthesis of sonic and visual phenomena. They tested their analytical method on 'moving pictures' with no verbal elements, which proved its axiological dimension.

Music iconography's journey around the world continues already this year, in Hobart, the state capital of Tasmania, where we will be expecting new contributions, insights, and discoveries in the domain of theories of art and culture, and, above all, music, in an 'iconic' world.