


Crossed Boundaries in Musical Culture between Asia and the West

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**Abstract:** In their article "Crossed Boundaries in Musical Culture between Asia and the West" Kheng K. Koay and Mikel LeDee examine Tony Prabowo's *Pasar Loak* (Flea Market) for soprano and percussions and Chinary Ung's *Grand Alap* (A Window in the Sky). Composers Prabowo and Ung adopt modernist techniques from Western and traditional Asian music cultures in their compositions. Koay and LeDee explore aspects which broaden the presentation of sound in the two selected compositions and the background influences of Western and Asian music on the two composers. Prabowo and Ung absorb new experiences and embrace music that excites them and Prabowo, especially, uses different musical techniques which range from the early to late twentieth century. Ung, on the other hand, incorporates musical idioms from different cultures such as India and Japan in his compositions. The two compositions not only challenge their audiences with new listening experiences, but also illustrate hybrid music between Asia and the West.

**Kheng K. KOAY and Mikel LeDEE**

### **Crossed Boundaries in Musical Culture between Asia and the West**

In this article, we examine musical works by Tony Prabowo, an Indonesian composer and Chinary Ung, a Cambodian-born US-American composer. Both Prabowo's *Pasar Loak* (Flea Market) and Ung's *Grand Alap* (A Window in the Sky) incorporate modernist techniques from Western with traditional Asian music. With the expansion of technology and global economies over the last twenty years, Asian-based entrepreneurs extended businesses and partnerships to the Western world. Social and cultural interactions also became closer between Asians and Westerners as a result of increased trade and the development of internet communication technology. As Razia Sultanova writes, "today the West and East have become closer than we think: different countries and cultures are now interacting in ways ranging from (and simultaneously interleaving) conflict to economic union" (133), Margaret J. Kartomi asserts that "it is highly doubtful that any completely isolated cultures exist in the world today. Thus, there is a strong likelihood that all musics are syntheses of more than one cultural influence" (230), and William H. Frederick claims that in Indonesia an "increasing large number of Indonesians of all social and economic classes not only have access to world culture, but are cultural tourists in their own nation, even their own region" (77). As a result, one is consistently challenged by cross-cultural and global thinking. With regard to music specifically, Kartomi suggests that "The use of foreign musical traits in a new context automatically implies that new musical and extra-musical meanings are attached to them, and innovative composers or other individuals in question do not necessarily understand these meanings in their native context, nor do they, of course, need to" (236). Similarly, Bruno Nettl wrote that "If a Western violin is found to be used in Indian music, even though its sound is hardly Western any more, it is difficult to escape the conclusion of Western influence, the violin having been brought from Europe, and at least some European violin music having been heard by Indians. But if we are fairly good at measuring musical relationships of style and perhaps instruments at least impressionistically, this is less the case for institutions and events, to say nothing of ideas about music" (369).

Asian composers are exposed to Western and world music by studying abroad and through local networks. The creation of the internet, compact discs, and other new media shape the music in every part of Asia. Martin Stokes writes that "The major recording corporations no longer are considered the only site of agency in the global circulation of musical style. A number of analyses stress the importance of state, civic, and other institution sponsors of world music scenes, radio and television broadcasting, small independent record labels, academic ethnomusicology programs, civic exchanges and concert-promoting organizations" (50). Music from different parts of the world are available at record shops, and radio and television broadcasts serve as powerful tools to connect viewers with foreign-derived music cultures. Given the ethnic diversity of audiences, private television stations often include a mix of local and foreign musical programs for entertainment. Magazines increasingly feature local as well as Western and world music columns. Not surprisingly, most Asian composers approach contemporary music writing with diverse cultural groundings. Asian music that shows a synthesis of East and West has also increasingly made its presence in concert halls and on compact discs. The Planet Gamelan festival, held in 1993 at Dartmouth College, included performances ranging from traditional Balinese and Javanese gamelan music to contemporary compositions by Indonesian and US-American composers. The Asian Contemporary Music Festival of 2009 held in Seoul and the 2010 Asian Music Festival at Tokyo University of the Arts each featured Asian contemporary and traditional music. These concerts represent an up-date of contemporary music from the West and East and also provide for a genuine interchange of musical ideas. Indeed, globalization has inspired new developments in Asian art and music.

There are various methods of writing music that represent composers' own musical traditions and at the same time demonstrate the influence of Western and Asian musical cultures. In most cases, composers incorporate Western musical elements and techniques, especially modernist techniques, into their music and thus transform their own styles and musical cultures into new and modern qualities: "Contemporary music embodies not just one but a number of trends in music whose common bond is their radical break with some vital aspects of traditions of the past – a break

encouraged by the belief that the contemporary composer must live in his (sic) own twentieth century world of ideas and developments in science, and respond, in some measure, to trends in intercultural communications" (Nketia 81). Both Prabowo and Ung have been exposed to Western music culture in their creative careers and have incorporate many styles. Ung studied in Columbia University and spent most of his time in the U.S. teaching composition. Prabowo was exposed to Western art music while studying at the Institute of the Arts in Jakarta. In their compositions, Prabowo and Ung not only absorb new experiences and embrace music that excites them, but they also reveal new perspectives in their music. While Prabowo uses different musical techniques ranging from the early to late twentieth century and native instruments in his music which carry symbols of the composer's national identity, Ung incorporates musical idioms from different cultures such as India and Japan in his compositions. Both compositions are concerned with sound colors and in order to appreciate the techniques which highlight different cultures, it is essential to know the composers' backgrounds.

Prabowo was born in 1956 in Malang, East Java. He studied Javanese gamelan and dance at the Institute of the Arts in Jakarta, began his violin lessons in the 1970s, and studied European and US-American contemporary compositional techniques by listening to recordings and studying scores. In 1996, Prabowo formed The New Jakarta Ensemble and the group explored both Indonesian and Western musical culture and played a wide variety of music. He also created works for performances, dance, film and multimedia. His interest in a broad range of music extends from works by contemporary Asian composers Tan Dun, Somei Satoh, and Bun Ching Lam to the Viennese School of Webern and Schoenberg to Hindemith, Bartók, Stravinsky, Bach, and Debussy. For example, in his 1998 *Commonality I* for viola and prerecorded tape, for example, Prabowo explores the electronic acoustic sound and uses 12 tone rows. Besides the experiments in modernist music, Prabowo uses traditional music such as gamelan. For instance, his 1996 *Autumnal Steps: Homage to Toro Takemitsu* integrates musical idioms from gamelan musical traditions and Western atonal compositional techniques and his 1996 *Pasar Loak* also shows a combination of Western and non-Western musical techniques and instruments.

Prabowo's music has become an increasingly challenging business and has attracted much attention from the world. To many music critics, Prabowo is "unique in composing for both Western and Indonesian ensembles" (Gluck <[http://cec.sonus.ca/econtact/11\\_3/indonesia\\_gluck.html](http://cec.sonus.ca/econtact/11_3/indonesia_gluck.html)>) and many claim that he is one of Indonesia's most distinguished composers and a significant force in Indonesian modern music. Many also see him as "a 'Western-style' composer in Indonesia and an 'Indonesia' composer abroad" ("Understanding" <<http://www.shaksfin.de/artists-productions/classical-music/composer/tony-prabowo/>>). Since the 1980s Prabowo has been building an international acclaim with his music being performed internationally. For example, his 1999 opera *The King's Witch* was performed by the New Juilliard Ensemble in Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center in 2000, the *Requiem for Strings* (1988) was performed by the Tanglewood Festival under composer-conductor Tan Dun in 1998 and by the Deutsche Kammer Philharmonie Bremen on their 1999 Indonesian tour, and *The Ritual of Solomon's Children* was presented at the New York International Festival of Arts in 1988. Prabowo has also received awards from Meet the Composer, the Ford Foundation, and the Asian Cultural Council, and his first choral work — *Meditation on Lu Xun II* (2000) — won first prize at the Choir Festival in Linz in 2000.

*Pasar Loak* was inspired by Goenawan Mohamad's poem "Di Pasar Loak" ("At the Flea Market"). The poem reflects on grief and feelings of loss. The language of the song is Indonesian and the abstracted instrumental sound produced by some of the gamelan instruments depict the environment and atmosphere of the flea market. The significance of *Pasar Loak* lies both in the sounds and in the integration of emotion of the text into sound phenomena. Dynamic shaping in a unique vocal singing style is what produces affect here. One finds a great deal of Western influence in the composition and it is not difficult for the audience to identify the sound sources and hence to trace them to a cultural frame of reference. Part of the reason for this is that — in addition to the use of a Western drum set such as a ride cymbal, floor tom, toms, bass drum, snare drum and hi-hat — Prabowo uses traditional local instruments often found in Javanese gamelan music such as the kempul, kendang, and gong. Prabowo uses Western instruments purely for musical reasons to produce sound color: these instruments do not carry any extra-musical meaning in the piece. At the same time, employing Western instruments together with local instruments provides a rich sound palette to the piece.

The composition was performed by The New Jakarta Ensemble led by Prabowo. Siam Records in New York recorded the piece in 1998. The composition is a stage work cast by Jujuk Prabowo

(filmography) and performed by Linda Hoemar (dancer), Nyak Ina Raseuki (aka Ubiet) (solo singer), and five percussionists. Prabowo uses human-made ambient sounds of the flea market to explore deeper expressive meaning of the poem. In his music review of *Pasar Loak*, Idrus F. Shahab writes that the text articulation in the music is sensitive and flexible: "In his composition *Pasar Loak*, Tony exhibited faithfulness to text, even to the extent of presenting an atmosphere of the busy flea market with the sounds of clanging glasses and fighting cats. Tony was faithful to the text, but he also maintained his independence. When the desire to be independent is stronger than to be faithful, an artist would even more loudly proclaim his independence, which is unrelated to the meaning of the word in literature, including his independence to create musical "words" and interpretation by the listeners of these words" (<<http://magz.tempco.co/konten/2005/02/15/MS/8232/Tony-the-Indefatigable/24/05>>). Prabowo's skill at integrating these apparently dissonant sources produces verisimilitude.

Among the many of his sources, the singing in the piece is clearly a Western influence. Even if the listener does not pay attention to the use of traditional instruments in the music, the unique singing technique reminds one of a vocal technique — *Sprechstimme* — in Schoenberg's compositions and such a vocal technique is also demonstrated in Prabowo's *Commenality II*. In *Pasar Loak*, Prabowo's musical setting is sensitive to the mood of the text and expresses every passing twist of emotion in the immensely concentrated language of the poem. However, the composition does not embrace the Western musical concept of harmony or of rhythmic control through meter and seems like an improvisation. There is no score for the percussionists and the presentation of the music is based on the collaboration of performers. This freedom of interpretation given to each performer is drawn from the traditional performing styles that are commonly found in traditional gamelan compositions (Warde 120). As Anderson Sutton claims, the "Javanese did not begin to notate gamelan music for over half a century after ... 1820" (67). Indeed, the preservation of traditional music culture in Indonesia remains important for Prabowo. To some extent, in his music Prabowo also stresses the image of traditional music making and gamelan performance: the performers are presented as if they are performing for local events and festivals, they wear *batik* (the traditional fabric of Indonesia), and some percussionists are sitting on the floor with their drums.

*Pasar Loak* begins with traditional percussion sounds: bronze-sounding instruments in bell shapes, *kenong-s* and *kempul-s* (gongs). The leather-head drum is used to punctuate the opening of each stanza of the poem and marks the division of music common in traditional Indonesian music: "pitch does not function here to mark levels of subdivision ... the function of kempul and kenong is to mark specific levels of subdivision" (Hoffman 84). Moreover, the textural layer both increases in intensity as the music progresses and creates a sense of direction toward the climax bringing a sense of closure at the end of the piece. While the texture thins out towards the end, the music does not function as an accompanying part to the vocal line as one would find in the traditional *Lied*. Rather, it serves as the background music. There is also a moment when the complex and layering of sound drumming is reminiscent of African drumming. However, the insertion of drumming passage is to provide a visual-sonic effect with the presentation of a scene of Chinese Shaolin martial arts demonstration. Indeed, it is not only Western influence found in Prabowo's music: one also witnesses multiple cross-cultural influences. Also, his use of modern dance choreography instead of local traditional dance is employed along with the music thus creating a unique combination of a "multicultural" idea in the performance. Other Western musical influence can also be seen in Prabowo's use of modernist sound color after the "Morse code, Save Us, S.O.S." Although Prabowo uses no electronic instruments, he produces electric sound through the technique of simultaneously bowing against hi-hats by different players. The sonic effect is similar to the sound mass that reminds one of Pendercki's *Trenody for the Victims of Hiroshima* and the wailing sirens during the war.

Ung, on the other hand, works from different traditions. Born in Takeo, Cambodia in 1942, Ung was not exposed to Western music until he was a teenager: "During my time in the sixties, I encountered the first classical performance when the New York Woodwind Quintet came to Cambodia and they played the first movement of Mozart. And I was 19 already ... I had no knowledge about classical music" (Carone and Cavanaugh <<http://www.kpbs.org/news/2010/aug/16/summerfest-artists-perform-live-wu-man-christopher/>>). Ung's father played several Cambodian instruments and

his family often performed informally at home. Upon graduating from the *Ecole de Musique* Phnom Penh music school in Cambodia, Ung went to the United States in 1964 on an Asia Foundation scholarship to study clarinet at New York's Manhattan School of Music. In 1974, he received a doctorate in music composition at Columbia University, where his principal teacher was Wen-Chung Chu, a Chinese American composer. Ung's music has received many awards including the prestigious Grawemeyer Award in 1989 for his *Inner Voices* and the Friedheim Award in 1989 for *Spiral* (1987). He was also offered numerous commissions. For example, his *Formless Spiral* was commissioned by the La Jolla Music Society Summer Fest and the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival in 2010, *In Memoriam* was commissioned by the Connections Chamber Music Series of California and the New Zealand Trio in 2011, a viola concerto was commissioned by the S.E.M. Ensemble in 2012, *Spiral VI* (1992) was commissioned by Harold Newman for the Aeolian Chamber Players in 1992, and *Spiral XIV* was commissioned by Zeitgeist. Ung's music has also been performed widely: *Spirals VI* was performed by Continuum as part of a Fromm Music Foundation concert at Harvard University in 2010, *O Cambodia* was performed as part of the 2011 Auckland Arts Festival, *After Rising Light* was performed at California State University Santa Barbara in collaboration with the Asian Young Musicians Connection in 2011, and *Angkor Tribute to the Masters* was a concert at Angkor Wat-Bayon Temple in Cambodia, celebrating 900 years of Cambodian music in 2011.

Ung's music reflects different Western musical influences. For example, Guy Rickards writes that Ung's *Spiral VI* "is an emerald ... its soulful Asian melodies merge seamlessly into an evocative, mid-European sound world that recalls a wealth of music from the early decades of the last century" (83). His *Seven Mirrors* (1997), reminiscent of Debussy's music, uses pentatonic scales to provide an impressionist atmosphere. According to Edward Green, the early period of Ung's music was modernist dominated, and it was when Ung intensely engaged with the reality of the Cambodian Holocaust that he developed a unique and personal style (<<http://newmusicon.org/index.php/2009/02/25/center-stage-the-cambodian-aesthetics-of-a-spiral-composer/>>). Indeed, the composer felt a strong desire to preserve his regional identity: not only does he employ musical sources from Cambodia in his music, but he also immerses himself in the music of his homeland learning to play the *roneat ek*, a Cambodian xylophone.

Beginning in the 1990s, Ung's music tends to be more eclectic. In a music review of Ung's *Antiphonal Spirals* (1995), Josef Woodard writes that "In this excitingly dense — yet also impressionistic — work, Ung is also tinkering with layerings and orchestral colors, exploring new ways of dealing with the institution of the Western symphony orchestra. The final result sounds almost Ivesian — albeit with an Asian sensibility — in its rippling, multidimensional surface, paring down, in the end, to a single note (<[http://articles.latimes.com/1995-11-20/entertainment/ca-5222\\_1\\_symphony-orchestra](http://articles.latimes.com/1995-11-20/entertainment/ca-5222_1_symphony-orchestra)>). Ung's music reflects different stylistic influences and draws on a wide range of Eastern musical traditions and techniques and Western musical idioms.

In his discussions of compositional writings, Ung says that "composition is a Western tool, so you have to be trained in this tool. But then you have to be liberated from the training. That is the spiritual direction that I propose you should take" ("Rain" <[http://www.futureasia.net/malaysiancomposers/focus/focus13\\_chinaryung.htm](http://www.futureasia.net/malaysiancomposers/focus/focus13_chinaryung.htm)>). Ung's music at some level often provides a taste of Asian music and he says that "in metaphor, if East is yellow and West is blue, then my music is green" (Rickards 83). For example, of Ung's *Khse Buon* (four strings), a one-movement work from 1980 for solo viola, Edward Green notes that "one cannot say if this is avant-garde music, or music which is enduringly traditional. It is at once Cambodian in its primal vocabulary, and yet syncretic, making use not only of the resources of 20th-century modernism but also of the tonal and temporal concepts of Indian, Japanese, and Indonesian music — doing so, moreover, in a manner that is deeply integrated" (Green). It comes as no surprise, then, that the composer incorporated musical idioms of Cambodia into the composition, since generally composers tend to trace their origins to distant lands and make contact with their cultures. In addition, in a music review, William Matthews comments that Ung's *Khse Buon* shows "a strong, sustained, and sonically rich solo for cello that frequently evokes Indian and Asian musical techniques" (Matthews, 62). Much of Ung's music incorporates voices, such as *Spiral II* (1989), *Grand Alap* (1996), and *Spiral XI* (2007). Ung's blurring of the instrumental and the vocal has been influential. In a music review, Thomas May

comments on the intention of Ung's "blurring" the distinction between instrumentalist and vocalist, and his use of vocal techniques such as whistling and chanting in *Spiral XII* (2008), a piece for chorus, instrumental ensemble and dancers and vocal soloists: "Ung's intention is to create an ambient that takes listeners beyond the walls of the concert hall, as if they are participating in a village ritual" (<[http://musicweb.ucsd.edu/media/news.php?query\\_status=Archived&query\\_id=%25](http://musicweb.ucsd.edu/media/news.php?query_status=Archived&query_id=%25)>).

*Grand Alap* is written for one amplified female cello player and one male percussionist, each of whom has a vocal part attached to their instrumental parts. The preface of the score states that the opening passage of *Grand Alap* "serves as a kind of ritual offering to all surrounding spirits and is a request for permission to begin the performance. This practice has occurred in the music-making practices of cultures throughout parts of Asia for many centuries, including Cambodia" (*Grand Alap*): the performers sing in phonemes that are derived from regions of South and Southeast Asia, while others resemble words in a few ancient languages, and "a few words have meaning in the Khmer (Cambodian) language, which derives from Pali and Sanskrit: 'Soriya' is the sun, 'Mekhala' is the goddess of water, and the words 'Mehta/Karina' refer to the concept of greater compassion" (*Grand Alap*). The work was commissioned by Maya Beiser and Steven Schick for the Meet the Composer/Reader's Digest Commission Program. The world premier of the composition was on 6 November 1996 in Sacramento at the Festival of New American Music. The title of the work derives from the opening, improvisatory passage of Indian *Raga* music, the *alap*: used "to display improvisational materials which relate to the music that will follow, yet it contains a deep expressivity" (*Grand Alap*). The subtitle of the composition, "A Window in the Sky," was inspired by a verse from an Indian poem in Rabindranath Tagore's *Song Offerings* and this shows Ung's interest in world music. The subtitle also refers to "the recent discovery of hundreds of newly found galaxies, and perhaps relates to the expository quality of the work and its expansiveness" (*Grand Alap*).

*Grand Alap* has received positive receptions. For instance, in a record review Guy Rickards writes that "in *Grand Alap*, a bracing duo for amplified cello and a battery of percussion, what sound like more traditional Asian musical sounds, rub shoulders with gestures not uncommon in more avant-garde Western scores, such as the syllabic vocalizations of the two performers" (84). In a music review, Naomi Parley writes that "Ung merges this Indian concept with musical materials derived from the traditions of South and Southeast Asia, to create a work of great beauty and intense emotion" (<<http://www.pamelaz.com/AdvocateJulliard.html>>). Other personal evaluations of the composition include Judith Page, an art critic, who says that "Chinary Ung's visually dynamic page, *Grand Alap*, is equally a painting and compositional notation" (<<http://www.isefoundation.org/english/ny/E030912now.html>>).

There are three layers to *Grand Alap*: cello, voice, and percussion instruments. It is linear with complex rhythmic activity and a highly developed treatment of compositional techniques. Its motivic design and structure owe much to compositional styles of post-war modernists. Thus, the music does not show any predictable direction. In addition, *Grand Alap* is notated in modernist styles found in the music of people such as Crumb and Stockhausen. The music also demonstrates constant changing meters in both irregular and regular time signatures such as 1/8, 2/8, 5/16, 2/8, 6/16, 3/8. In addition, Western modernists' extended vocal techniques — such as whistling, humming, speaking, and singing in syllables along with other techniques such as the use of quarter tones, cluster tones and snap pizzicato — are incorporated. The use of phonetic singing can also be seen in his early 1970 composition *Tall Wind*. Like much of Ung's music, and as noted in the preface to the score *Grand Alap*, the vocal lines in the composition have several functions: the vocal lines are used to extend instrumental sounds or vice-versa and at times they are interlocked with instrumental sounds. Despite the experimental handling in the composition, the music relates with pictorial imagines: "Instrumental display is continuous throughout the piece, while the voices can be said to contribute dots and dashes, or curves of expressive colors in a painting which emerge out of the canvas. Here, the surface of the canvas is represented by the ever-present instrumental sonority" (*Grand Alap*).

Like Prabowo, Ung incorporates traditional instruments such as the Javanese gong, the Thai gong, and the hand drum in the composition for sound effects. Moreover, there are moments where Ung searches for new listening experiences and the combination of phonetic singing and instrumental melodic lines give an impression of, and remind one of, music cultures of Japanese classic dance-vocal

and Indian music. The five tones A-B flat-D-E-G employed in the marimba share four similar pitches found in the Japanese *iwato* scale of A-B flat-D-E flat-G. The five pitches are scattered and they can be seen in the cello part as well and give a hint of Japanese music. However, Ung approaches it on a level such that he might create his own contemporary musical idioms. Further, the use of the hand drum at the beginning and ending to accompany the phonetic singing are reminiscent of the sound texture commonly found in Indian dance-song music such as the *Om Shivoham* composed by Ilayaraja (an Indian composer who was the first Asian to score for a symphony for the London Philharmonic Orchestra). The vocal parts of *Grand Alap* are narrow in pitch range, fragmented, and are usually centered on several repeated pitches, giving the intervals of a half-tone, whole tone, thirds, and fourths. It is a piece that shows multi-cultural influence in Western contemporary music presentation.

What we demonstrate here is that globalization has caused social transformations exemplified in music. In many ways, world musical genres and Western art musical idioms have smoothly adapted to the new environment. This in turn has led to composers integrating a worldwide range of musical cultures in their compositions: both Prabowo and Ung have absorbed a wide range of influences. Their music makes constant reference to the combination of Western and Asian musical cultures, combining if not balancing the two. Indeed, the musical idioms used in the two compositions reflect the various musical influences on the composers, despite the fact that their music shows strong Western musical influences. In *Pasar Loak*, Prabowo's expressionism speaks to us as a musical language in the spirit of crossed cultures in our time. The composer experiments with new combinations of traditional and Western percussion instruments, as well as with idioms. Using traditional instruments is a way to adapt to the local environment and Prabowo comes close to translating the spirit of poetry into music. The vocal part conjures up a powerful image of despair. The music contributes powerfully to the overall meaning of the poem and captures the sound-scape of the flea market and Prabowo uses both Western and local sound colors to invoke the audience's imagination. Musically — despite the use of modernist vocal techniques and Western instruments — the overall sound does not change its direction to Western music: Prabowo is able to provide a sense of the local in the composition. Despite the fact that the vocal techniques used are abandoned by many contemporary composers in Europe, the combination of a variety of techniques such as "electronic" texture and local sound colors in the composition provide a different approach to music. One cannot help but think that Prabowo searches for a true modern Indonesian art music culture and he relates to his audiences in his own environment no matter what he does with the Western experience. Similarly, there is an imaginative experimental spirit found in *Grand Alap*. Ung captures something essential about the quality of sound color in his music. The overlapping in cultures is also illustrated in his use of Khmer language and other phonemes derived from Southeast Asia. The music is modern, yet not without Cambodian familiarity. The primary concern for the composer is to make his own voice and Ung's originality lies in the fusion of Asian musical flavor, postwar modernist textures, and idioms in the composition. Perhaps, as S. Firth puts it, hybridity is "the new authenticity" (305). Ung employs simultaneously three different musical idioms without falling into any individual ethnic musical authenticity. He makes creative use of voices and different techniques and musical materials to generate a unique sound that provides a sense of visual effect through hearing. The functions of voice in the music have become the compositional style of the composer. In *Grand Alap* we hear how Ung anticipates Asian musical culture in a Western musical style and his music challenges contemporary audience.

In conclusion, despite the differences in approach to music between the two composers, one finds strands of continuity in their attempt to compose cross-cultural and universal music and it is precisely this musical language that makes their music interesting. Seen in the two examples discussed, the two compositions challenge their audiences with new listening experiences and serve as the foundation for the development of hybrid music between the West and Asia and lead us to alternative uses of compositional writings and sources.

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