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MUSIC COMPOSER'S ONLINE ARTISTIC RESPONSES AND ONLINE LESSONS DURING AND POST-LOCKDOWN

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought upon the world new normality onto various aspects of our lives. An area of the arts that has been profoundly affected, and not necessarily in an undesirable way is, music. Music has always been a part of our lives either directly or indirectly. However, the lockdowns implemented all over the world due to Covid-19 pandemic has forced or voluntarily made music makers and composers create their art in purely online environments. With an increased number of audience presences online during the pandemic, composers are innovatively using media extensively to create, and the artistic results have been more intimate, emotional, and personal with the inclusion of a more direct communication with audiences. Composers and music makers are writing music either in seclusion or apart, while producing unnecessarily solo pieces but also all kinds of mixed ensembles. Music is then recorded and brought upon together through technology, and sometimes encouraging collective creativity. At the same time, social isolations have brought upon an increase in online digital connections with concerts, ensembles, and musical being live streamed online. Alternative and conventional creative spaces of composers are created either intentionally or unintentionally indoor or outdoor of private spaces – balcony, bedroom, living room, or the house garden. During the pandemic, themes of musical content include communicating self-emotions and self-expressions. This paper shall discuss into artistic responses of composers and give an insight into the ways music is created and communicated and how we, as humans, listen and watch music during and after the pandemic concern. The creative and performing spaces and themes are also discussed in this article. This article also looks upon the composers' role as educators and how the lockdown situations have changed their composition lessons.

Keywords: *compositional activity, Covid-19, creative music, music composer, music composition.*

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INTRODUCTION

A decline of musical consumption following numerous cancellations of live concerts and cultural events has immensely impacted the musical economy and musical activities during Covid-19 pandemic (Agarwal & Sunitha, 2020), and consequently with the closed and decreased used of music in public spaces (Botstein, 2019). As we all have experienced, beginning March 2020, a pandemic lockdown occurred in the world resulting in restricted movements and activities directly affecting the performing arts arena. The music world has taken a major hit during the period, and the future of the world's music scene is far from certain. But most certainly, the composer community is responding to the coronavirus crisis during this unprecedented emergency.

A full lockdown was implemented around the world during the early months and the first year when the Coronavirus scare hit us. Very high cautions caused most parts of the world to continue full or slightly partial lockdowns or restrictions of movements and gatherings throughout the period and are still being enforced in some countries with high reports for Covid-19 cases. This article is a general observation of both Malaysian composers and composers abroad in the aspect of how they are working and producing musical works during the current phenomenon of a pandemic. Roughly, this article will be sharing the observations which are outlined into: frequency of compositional activities; theme of communication; instrumentation and genre; method, technology, and tools; collaborative efforts; venue and spaces; and composer as educator.

This article shall give a view into composers at home and abroad on their working spaces, working processes, musical outcomes, and

management of composition lessons during the lockdown period.

METHOD

Open-ended questions were prepared for six selected composers from Malaysia and United Kingdom to achieve the overall observation of composers' composing activities during the early stages of the pandemic in year 2020. At the same time, composers chosen to participate are also educators in the field of music composition to further validate and add reliability to the questions and answers obtained and in line with the main purpose of this study. From their answers, this article shall then discuss the results of their answers for each section.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequency of compositional activities

Normally, composers often work independently to produce compositional work for the development of their own portfolio. And at other times or at the same time they are also commissioned to produce musical works by producers or arthouses or receive performance grants from opera directors or orchestral directors and so forth to be included in bigger compositional projects. So previously when there were no restrictions on arts, cultural and social activities, composers could easily thrive with regular commissions and performance demands. But in recent times, this regularity has been disrupted by cancellation of performances because of lockdowns and closed performance spaces (Howard et. al., 2021). Therefore, this section oversees the frequency of compositional activities and is questioning if and how has the pandemic and lockdown affected the regularity of composing for the composer. For

example, has the crisis in any way disrupted creation of compositions or not at all or only slightly.

Composers were asked how often their composing activities were during the pandemic and has it affected them to do it more often or less? As we investigate the frequency of composing, we can observe composers are composing at their regular pace or even more during this pandemic crisis probably because of freer time and might only be less composing during study term as they will have to be involved in preparing music lessons at their universities, colleges, or part-time music teaching.

- During the early part of the crisis and over the summer, more. This was due to having all trips cancelled and being on research leave. However now that Autumn term has begun the answer is ‘less’ because we have to teach much more and prepare many more online materials at University. (ME, UK)
- Less often (but I am also on maternity leave). (LE, UK)
- More. (KT, UK)
- More often. (KH, Malaysia)
- During this period, instead, I have a lot of private time to compose. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Less often during MCO and the same during RMCO. (YKH, Malaysia)

Theme of Communication

With closed performance venues to audiences worldwide, opera and orchestra houses for example are holding online concerts either broadcasted live or as pre-recorded performances for online audiences instead to sustain public support and patronage. So, with an increased number of audience presence online during the pandemic, composers are innovatively using media extensively to create,

and the artistic results have been more intimate, emotional, and personal with the inclusion of a more direct communication with audiences (Baym, 2018).

During the pandemic, themes of musical content include communicating self-emotions and self-expressions of hope, struggle, unity, health, contemplation, sadness, sorrow, joy, humour, loneliness, gratitude, boredom, love, fear, anxiety, anger, nostalgia, and yearning. It seems that the idea of theme and communication surrounding Covid does and does not necessarily influence the compositions or its titles. At most times compositions may derive from personal emotions or themes of Covid and sometimes composers may instead continue working on developing their own portfolio and commissions.

- Same as before: the end of Nomadism in Turkey. And one short piece ‘I’m content, whatever my troubles’ (ME, UK)
- I have one commission which I will be working on from Nov 2020. I plan to explore physical gesture in this piece and how it can help to shape musical structures. (LE, UK)
- Mainly emotion and deeply influenced and inspired by the crisis itself. (KT, UK)
- I only write music for films during this period, so my emotion is heavily inspired by what I see what I compose (KH, Malaysia)
- I do not limit the themes of my composition, it can be any themes, and the focus is to meet my personal emotional and aesthetic values. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Theme related to the pandemic: “a Symphonic Wind work, and 7 vocal pieces” and theme that not related: “an orchestra piece, a chamber piece” (YKH, Malaysia)

Composer LE also mentions the constant visual communication through online video calls has her pondering about the visual dimensions of her music now. Composer KH working in the studio has also stated less recording activities due to difficulty of having musicians in the studio at the time of lockdown. The pandemic crisis is found to influence compositions written, not always directly concerning the music score but sometimes on how the music is formulated based upon resources, technological, and technical availability.

- 'I'm content, whatever my troubles' which is an instrumental version of an Aria from the opera I'm writing—but the theme does indirectly relate obviously to the present situation. (ME, UK)
- The crisis has unveiled new ways of collaborating with musicians - via video call - which has influenced my work. It has got me thinking about the visual dimension of my music. (LE, UK)
- Time wise I had more time and inspiration to compose, on the other hand making a living has been harder so I have not been prioritising composing but rather teaching as my main income source. Therefore, the compositions I've been completing are mainly for my sake rather than commissions. (KT, UK)
- Working method got affected – much lesser recording because unable to bring in musicians, work from home instead of a full equipped studio in the first MCO period, all communication done over the internet, and it has some disadvantages. (KH, Malaysia)
- Because it is impossible to perform any performances, the deadline for composition works has been extended. For the composer, there is more time to compose. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Due to all my pieces were/will perform virtually, I also reconsidered the acoustic

elements which not based in the concert hall. (YKH, Malaysia)

Instrumentation and Genre

Instrumentation is the combination of musical instruments employed in any sort of musical composition. Genre on the other hand is often defined using features or external characteristics, such as the piece's origin, or stated influences.

During this Covid crisis, composers and music makers are writing music either in seclusion or apart, while producing not unnecessarily solo pieces like we might imagine because of being isolated and being apart but, composers are also continuing to compose for all kinds of mixed ensembles. Sometimes, with the question of only working with available resources, meaning working with available musicians and instruments and depending on the nature of the project, composers compose accordingly towards the existing requirement and resource of the project while consciously not foregoing the artistic and aesthetic value of the musical work. This is highly important. This means no matter if it is a composition work for a solo instrument or an orchestral work, both still weigh value in artistry and impact (Szostak & Sułkowski, 2021).

The restrictions of lockdown during Covid-19 pandemic have in many ways influence composers' instrumental decisions and genre ideas. It can be observed that there is a majority or a preference towards solo and smaller ensemble works now, which includes vocal works as well. One of the major reasons is the ability to rehearse with musicians as composer KT points out. Another big reason is the platform of virtual or live-streamed concert where the availability of many musicians and the feasibility of always having

a large orchestra online at a single time is quite demanding.

- Not yet, but I see those around me writing for solo or small ensembles more. (ME, UK)
- Not as such. I am currently working to commission, so the ensemble is set for me. If I were to start my own project, I would go for a duo or solo so that video rehearsals would be manageable. (LE, UK)
- Yes, I've been focusing on smaller ensembles that can still meet and rehearse. (KT, UK)
- I have been working for projects since MCO starts till late last month – a police action film, a comedy action film, and a sport documentary. All music I've been working on is specially produced for the needs for all scenes in these projects. My instrumentation might get affected a little because of the difficulty to work with live musicians, just a little. Other than that, no. (KH, Malaysia)
- Any form of small chamber music is currently the main composition. This is also an opportunity brought about by this crisis. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Due to all my pieces were/will perform virtually, I also reconsidered the acoustic elements which not based in the concert hall. (YKH, Malaysia)

Solo works only involves one performer while smaller ensembles require a maximum of up to ten musicians only, compared to twenty or up to a hundred musicians in an orchestra. Less musicians involved means lesser challenges in online rehearsals and virtual simultaneous communication. Therefore, before beginning to compose, composers are now always anticipating and there is always room to reconsider acoustic and instrumentation aspects for online performances instead of in an acoustically appropriate performance hall. Nevertheless, musical works for solo

instruments are not the only music composed during these lockdown times.

- No (not only solo compositions). (ME, UK)
- Please see above (same answer as before). (LE, UK)
- Yes, mainly for solo. (KT, UK)
- Not necessarily (solo compositions). (KH, Malaysia)
- Mainly composed for instruments ensemble, and vocal works. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Due to all my pieces were/will perform virtually, I also reconsidered the acoustic elements which (are) not based in the concert hall. (YKH, Malaysia)

Method, technology, and tools

Music is composed and/or recorded and brought upon together through technology, and sometimes encouraging collective creativity. As with all inventions by great scientists before, challenges spur creativity and innovation. Creativity also delivers its challenges. It is a highly productive cycle. The current challenging times have called on creativity in the arts world causing composers to investigate diverse ways of composing and with diverse contents. Since the new millennium, composers have always been in current touch of technology in arts media. But unlike normal times, this past couple of years requires a deeper realization and manifestation of the use of technology. However, it must not be forgotten or taken for granted that even with the increasing use of music software and technology, music making and composing music certainly requires doses of creativity and this does not mean that the software or technology itself was designed to entirely support musical creativity (Costalonga, Keller & Messina, 2020). This section looks into the technology being used by composers in the

current pandemic situation.

Before the pandemic, music notation software such as Sibelius and Finale are widely used to compose and notate music, and both are also accepted by various computational devices hence its popularity, as well as other hardware music technology tools which are popular and integrative in most systems are mostly used.

- Sibelius¹ (ME, UK)
- Sibelius (LE, UK)
- Mainly composing on my computer but also writing scores for acoustic ensembles. (KT, UK)
- Mainly on DAW², digital piano as MIDI³ controller... nothing changes(d) during MCO (movement control order) (KH, Malaysia)
- Generally, they are created by composing computer software or handwriting with staff. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Finale⁴ notation software (YKH, Malaysia)

However, during lockdown situation, the amount of music software and hardware chosen by composers sometimes slightly increased to accommodate the missing point of communication or the missing link of the compositional process.

- Sibelius (ME, UK)
- Sibelius, Whatsapp, Face Time, Logic, Zoom (LE, UK)
- Mainly computer music. (KT, UK)
- Same as above. (KH, Malaysia)
- Currently used are still the same tools and technology during this pandemic lockdown. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Finale notation software (YKH, Malaysia)

It is heartening to see composers embracing technology ever more now and none has refused technology during this crisis. Most composers have taken the liberty to acquire a

deeper understanding of digital music and media technology to enhance their compositional work, educational work, digital communication, as well as improving accessibility of reaching out to their audience and students.

- Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, Skype for business etc—all the communication platforms, not composition ones. (ME, UK)
- Zoom (LE, UK)
- Not really, except for my teaching. Composing technology is the same as before. (KT, UK)
- Yes, exploring quite several new plugins but still using them on the same platform of DAW – Logic Pro, Reason. Tried using Ableton a bit. (KH, Malaysia)
- Computer software: Finale. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes, Zoom and another online platform (YKH, Malaysia)

Despite the new demands on technology understanding and possessing new tools, most composers have not found these to interfere or drastically change their creative compositional processes.

- Having no printer forced me for several months to not use my method of doing a draft, then printing, then filling in orchestration. But I'm back to that now. (ME, UK)
- My focus has changed, but my process is not too different. (LE, UK)
- Not significantly. (KT, UK)
- No significant change. (KH, Malaysia)
- I will try to use all kinds of computer software that is good for music composition. (WCW, Malaysia)
- No, same as before, I'm mainly using Finale Notation Software (YKH, Malaysia)

Of course, the relationship between music composers and technology has always been together and unavoidable since before. But until recently, there have been more platforms to assist music composers in compositional work and broadcasting, especially in composer KT's case it's social media to promote his compositions.

- I am using the internet – video call- for rehearsals and contact with musicians, more than usual. (LE, UK)
- I am using more social media to promote my compositions. (KT, UK)
- I haven't broadcast any music since MCO, but I've been preparing a lot for that. (KH, Malaysia)
- Agree. During this MCO time, the use and operation of the media has become very important, especially for the presentation of my own composition (WCW, Malaysia).
- Yes, all my concerts have been moved to online in this period. (YKH, Malaysia)

Collaborative efforts

As mentioned before in theme of communication, the aspect of collaborative efforts taken on by composers during these times are also worth looking upon. Especially with the new mode of online concerts, are composers more willing or less willing to work with others considering of non-physical rehearsals and staging without audiences in the hall? Due to social isolation during Covid-19 pandemic, musicians are found to be struggling to adapt to online communication for performance and musical activities in groups without interaction support, as humans are socially and rhythmically synchronized by the alignment of actions in groups rather than separately according to a metronome (Costalonga, Keller, & Messina, 2020). Despite these drawbacks, composers continue with collaborative projects by online performances

either synchronous or asynchronously. The pandemic lockdown and restrictions are seeing active collaborative efforts between composers with musicians mainly involving online work, online performances, and live streaming through platforms such as Zoom, Skype, FB Live, YouTube etc. And these platforms are also used during online performance meetings and rehearsals. So, it is encouraging to see many compositional activities and performances are still going ahead even though not in a conventional way. Performance collaborations between composers with musicians no matter from the same country or between different countries are possible with online digital technology and composers have embraced this opportunity to maintain their compositional activity as often as they can during, and after lockdown. The only exception is composer KH where he is working within his own team.

- Yes, more with musicians from Taiwan, and some in Bristol doing the Covid project mentioned above. And with many musicologists on our ERC book. (ME, UK)
- Yes (I do collaborate with others during lockdown). (LE, UK)
- I've been trying to collaborate with musicians around Europe and I'm hoping this is going to be the silver lining of all this sad time. (KT, UK)
- No. Only among our team. (KH, Malaysia)
- During this period, I will still conduct interviews with musicians and composers, hold meetings and discuss future cooperation plans. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes. (YKH, Malaysia)

Most collaboration and efforts take place on online multimedia communication platforms such as Zoom and Skype except for composer KH who is not collaborating externally but

instead working on his own internal projects.

- Talk on Zoom or Skype. (ME, UK)
- Through Zoom. (LE, UK)
- Composing together and even having virtual meetings so we can talk about our compositions thoroughly. (KT, UK)
- Nothing outside from our own project, so there is no collaboration. (KH, Malaysia)
- Collaborative content is generally carried out on the Internet (online). (WCW, Malaysia)
- Mostly through Zoom meeting and rehearsal with musicians. (YKH, Malaysia)

Complete online concerts which are lengthier could also instead be presented in pre-recorded short concerts in a series format. Nearly half of the composers are not composing for any online concerts, but two-thirds are composing music for online concerts, while one is working on an actual live performance aimed for after lockdown.

- Yes. It airs next Friday on the UoB Lunchtime concert series. (ME, UK)
- No. I am working on a piece for live performance. (LE, UK)
- Only in a casual social media way and in short excerpts rather than complete concerts. (KT, UK)
- I would love to, but we couldn't find free time to do that. (KH, Malaysia)
- Yes. This year is to be the 40th anniversary of the Institute of Music. The department initiated pre-recorded online concerts. Many musicians participated in performances and published works, including myself of course. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes, there are 5 live-streamed virtual concerts. (YKH, Malaysia)

Venue and Spaces

Music is a social art form (cultural). It is created through certain contexts, and when these contexts change so does the music, the creative process of the music, and its consumption (Wall, 2013). The creative spaces of composers have differed slightly during lockdowns and the crisis. The alternate venue or spaces of creativity such as either outdoor or virtual concerts, has made composers more inventive and adaptive towards composing. All are working at home, and some have chosen to return to their office and studio to carry on composing works after lockdown has been lifted.

- At home. Keyboard, baglama, voice. More recently in Music Dept. as well. (ME, UK)
- In my study, as usual. With piano and Sibelius. (LE, UK)
- Exclusively from my living room (during lockdown). Still mainly from home as many venues are still closed and with the limitations of more than 6 people gathering it's hard to have any kind of productive rehearsal (after lockdown). (KT, UK)
- Work from home in the first MCO, then moved back to Studio (after lockdown) till now. Draft music on acoustic piano more often. Other than that, all are the same. (KH, Malaysia)
- I am with the piano at home (during lockdown). Will be more inclined to compose at home (after lockdown). (WCW, Malaysia)
- In my house, most of the time. Some in my office (during lockdown). During MCO, in my house; During CMCO, still in my house; During RMCO until now: in my house and in my college's office (after lockdown). (YKH, Malaysia)

But generally, the composers do not face too much difficulty in working from home as some composers have found the lockdown times as the most productive time for their composition output and only composer LE has found it limited and her process changed due to shared working time and space at home.

- It's limited to home, but this is near normal now: both home and work. (ME, UK)
- My partner is now working from home too, which has changed my creative space and working day. (LE, UK)
- Yes, in a bad way but it also made me more inventive. (KT, UK)
- Yes, this period we produced the best music in our career. (KH, Malaysia)
- I think it is ok for me. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes (YKH, Malaysia)

We have seen unusual performance spaces indoors or outdoors for example performances on rooftops and balconies. Different and unconventional performance spaces such as online, live-streaming, rooftops, outdoor gardens, and no physical audience are some of the characteristics of recent musical showcases during Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, questions on acoustic and projection of sounds could be factors to consider during the compositional process for composers. Alternative and unconventional creative spaces of performances could potentially influence composer's choices of composition works either intentionally or unintentionally for composers ME, WCW and YKH.

- (Not yet), but Hezarfen has an outdoor concert next year in Izmir we'll reconsider repertoire for (ME, UK).
- (No), but my process has changed. I now have scheduled breaks with my partner, which sometimes stops my flow more than I would like. (LE, UK)
- Yes, I recently started composing for specific players (than instruments) who I

knew would be available for rehearsing or recording online. (KT, UK)

- No. (KH, Malaysia)
- Will. This will seriously affect the content and presentation of the composition. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes, but not too much. (YKH, Malaysia)

Nevertheless, while composers are aware of this conundrum, they are at most times more concerned on the availability of instruments and musicians. Instead of composing for specific instruments, composers now compose for specific players who are available for rehearsing or recording at determined times instead of composing for specific instruments. For composer KT, the availability of musicians is now more crucial than ever than having the choice of which instruments to compose for.

Composer as Educator

Most of the respondents in this observation for this article are composers as well as educators teaching in music institutions. Fellow respondents are chosen as a basis to this discussion today to get an insight of their compositional activities during the covid crisis, while bearing in mind that they are also dual profession and function as composers and educators. Most of the time, composition lessons are about physical demonstration and communication either through writing in a student's manuscript book or by face-to-face demonstration on the piano. To overcome the changes in carrying out an online composition class, it is necessary for music educators to now use different strategies and adapt to alternative methods for assigned tasks. Music educators also adopt different pedagogical approaches, revise assignments, or have a more collaborative approach in class, for example, students' music compositional

works will become point of critical discussions instead of just a one-way communication from teacher to student only (Biasutti, Phillippe, & Schiavo, 2021). In music learning it is a vital practice to maintain interactions and rapports between teacher and student to obtain solid learning (Gleiser and Danon, 2003; Fischlin and Heble, 2004). An essential part of music education is the mutual relationship or bond in the teaching and learning process between teacher and students (Elliott and Silverman, 2015).

As mentioned in the beginning, all respondents are composers as well as educators in higher learning institutions. Mostly, all are seen continuing giving online music and composition classes or online supervision of composition projects to their students during study term time.

- Very good experiences giving tutorials online from March to today. More students joining by remote learning as official students from faraway places. (ME, UK)
- No. I am on maternity leave. (LE, UK)
- Yes and in fact this has become the highlight of my compositional work. Teaching was tricky the first week or so but all my students were very keen in using online technology to continue lessons and, in many ways, this is now easier and even better than teaching in person. (KT, UK)
- I still gave lecture classes to my UiTM students, and OCEAN. All were done online. (KH, Malaysia)
- Yes. I am still doing practical teaching, and at the same time, online classes are also in progress. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes, all my classes have been moved to online since MCO started (YKH, Malaysia)

Although KH finds it more challenging for practical and demonstrative subjects and YKH finds it easier for theoretical subjects, half of the composers found it easier, better, more

productive, and usually very good experiences having online classes while another half does not quite agree and face problems such as poor connections and students with inadequate technology equipment.

- Easy, since I insist, they send score half hour before so I can print first and go over before the Zoom call. Usually very good, except if someone's technology doesn't work well. (ME, UK)
- Hard at the start but got easy and very productive very soon after we got used to the new software and way of structuring the lessons. I would say in many ways better than face to face. (KT, UK)
- Not easy at all, especially all subjects are applied composition; they're all very practical subjects. There are upside and downside. Students who pay more attention will benefit more than a normal face-to-face lecture. (KH, Malaysia)
- Online teaching is very difficult, when the network is unstable. Very bad. Difficulty in smooth and normal communication. (WCW, Malaysia)
- No problem for the theoretical subjects. I have no problem to conduct my class virtually, moving from offline to online is a new trend. (YKH, Malaysia)

But most agree that online teaching is exhausting, not meeting full expectations, and cannot produce emotional exchanges with students.

- Mostly, but the digital platforms are more exhausting on eyes, body so one is more tired after several of these than one would be from live lesson. But also, in some ways more relaxed-don't need to go anywhere. (ME, UK)
- Absolutely. (KT, UK)
- It can be done better, both myself and students. I would say 80% out of my expectation. (KH, Malaysia)

- Not satisfied. Online teaching cannot produce emotional exchanges with students and demonstrations of teaching materials. (WCW, Malaysia)
- Yes (YKH, Malaysia)

Other thoughts and opinions

There are other additional opinions on the overall thoughts of the causes Covid pandemic has brought upon the composers' professional lives, and personal sentiments. KH has described this as the best time to write music and composers should get to know their publishing/copyrights to expand their publishing in a secured way, while YKH is expressing regret of not being able to perform his work in a solid hall with a real audience for such a long time.

- This period is the best time to write your own materials, at the same time figuring out how to get your music out there... instead of panicking. Majority composers and musicians (any music outside of pop and songwriting related music) care very little about their own music right – publishing right, sound recording right, musician / artist right. These people, including my old self some years back, have almost zero understanding about these rights. Figure that out and you will see a new path in your career. (KH, Malaysia)
- I miss the concert hall and a Physical-presence-audience! (YKH, Malaysia)

Technical challenges and latency

There are certainly unavoidable challenges in maintaining good, high-quality sound productions of acoustic instruments transmitted through internet connections during online musical activities. Preserving sound production

quality becomes a challenge as high-speed internet connections and online digital devices are sometimes unavailable for some audience or composers.

Composers working with musicians or music educators with composition students also frequently experience internet latency. Music workshops or music rehearsals become interfered with delays in transmitting ideas, or online concerts and online teachings are attended with low audiovisual quality.

With new motivation and reason to acquire latest online digital devices and online digital software, learning new technology takes time to master, although, its acquisition has a deep impact on the quantity and improved quality of production of online music collaborations and music composition learning.

As there is no absolute solution to solving the challenge of internet latency, efforts could be taken to finding ways to stabilize the network, improve transmission, and to bring internet services to more institutions worldwide (Wilson, 2020). Nevertheless, composers and educators now must develop musical compositions or musical improvisations that interact with the internet latency. Therefore, composers nowadays must understand the digital online situation to create compositional strategies and utilize the digital solutions available.

CONCLUSION

With an increased number of audience presences online during the pandemic, composers are innovatively using media extensively to create, and the artistic results have been more intimate, emotional, and personal. Overall, there is an increase of online presence for our composers in context with

direct communication with students or with audiences during online performances and with musicians during rehearsals and performance. Nevertheless, the expected level of communication and exchange of expression is questionable and sometimes unsatisfactory.

As for composers' role as educators, some might experience 'digital fatigue' somewhat mental and physical tiredness due to digital overload in pre-preparation for classes using online educational interactive platforms and even stress during classes when faced with technical glitches either by them or by students. However, in an optimistic way this pandemic crisis has certainly brought upon composers cum educators such creative ideas and innovative deliveries either in composing, performances or also in teaching their craft.

Elements of communication, interaction, and empathy between student and teacher can positively influence the learning process within a music lesson (de Bruin, 2019). Faced with the possibility of an extended operation of online composition classes and music performances, suspended ensemble-work, less connection among musicians and composers, and less interaction between students with their teachers, the composers seek to emphasize and continue to adapt, improve and maintain the connection to one another.

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NOTES

¹ Sibelius is a music notation software.

² Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) is a device or software designed for recording, editing, and mixing audio files.

³ Musical Instrument Digital Interface (MIDI) is a digital interface to connect computers, synthesizers, and samplers enabling them to communicate using MIDI messages.

⁴ Finale is a music notation software.