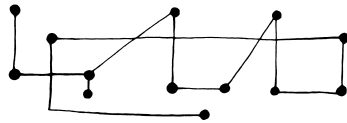


GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION



CHRIS VAN RHYN

PRESENTING THIS COLLECTION OF ARTICLES about new music from Africa requires contextualization and reflection on its composition and contents, and the definition of “new music.” Although the idea was never to be representative (any such attempt on a continent this large and diverse would be futile and misguided), the contributions I received turned out to focus on and come from smaller subsections of the continent than anticipated: Sub-Saharan, English-speaking Africa, and particularly Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa. (However, not all the authors come from or are based in Africa.) On the one hand, this speaks to where my contacts are situated and context as an academic in the English-speaking world. On the other hand, it speaks to the significant disconnect between African countries where the business of music academia is concerned—some favor looking towards the global North; whereas, others aim their research mostly at local audiences. Also, in some African countries, there is almost no such business of which to speak. The establishment of Conservatories or University Music Departments based on the Western model depended on the priorities of colonial powers or post-independence governments’ colonial-inspired nationalist ideals, and socio-economic circumstances. In South Africa, the Apartheid government facilitated the disproportionately wide establishment of such training facilities. Despite Egypt

having a long history of formal musical training in the Western guise, North Africa is notably absent from this volume.

The contributions' contents may or may not depart from what is usually seen in *Perspectives of New Music* for various reasons. The extensive, unexplored archive of works by composers from Africa that do not yet form part of broader discourses sometimes requires basic research that would otherwise not have been necessary. In other cases, where composers have had more international exposure or have been the subjects of detailed scrutiny at a national level, authors could engage in more detailed analyses at a higher level of abstraction. Music studies in Africa are known for purposefully disregarding strict divisions between Music Theory, Analysis, Musicology and Ethnomusicology, which is evident in the articles presented here. The definition of “new music” (or “art music” or “contemporary classical music”) is fluid. It includes film music, contemporary choral music with strong roots in Western hymn traditions, and music of pre-colonial origins performed outside their traditional contexts or applied in new musical contexts.

The first two contributions both focus on aspects of language in West African choral art music. Joshua Amuah and Hilarius Wuaku consider code-switching—a linguistic-compositional strategy already familiar in popular Ghanaian music—in choral art music by contemporary Ghanaian composers. Their article aims to tease out the reasons for these composers' implementation of this strategy and how it aids in communicating with audiences. Short biographies of the composers in question serve to inform readers less familiar with the Ghanaian art music composition scene. Aaron Carter-Enyi considers the significance of contour and transformational theory in settings of tone language texts through his analyses of two secular choral works by Nigerian composers. These works, *Óbì Dìmkpà* (1980) by Laz Èkwuémé and *Omọ̀lúàbí* (2018) by Ayò Olúrántí, are based on local proverbs.

Issues concerning musical style and identity are approached in three diverse ways. Wilhelm Delpoit aims to draw Schoenberg's notion of *Abfallmaterials* into conventional harmonic analysis by outlining the critical role quartal compounds play in the South African composer Hendrik Hofmeyr's compositional language. The author analyzes Hofmeyr's *Sonata per Pianoforte* (2011) for this purpose. William Fourie presents a reading of Andile Khumalo's *Bells Die Out* (2013), an ensemble work by a young, Black South African composer who received European and American compositional training. Fourie's reading argues for viewing Khumalo's music as challenging racially defined expectations, not simply through a wholesale adoption of a European style, but by cautiously resisting the conventionalities of

what appears to be a European style on the surface. Emaeyak Sylvanus explores the interconnectedness between Nollywood film music identity formations and three contexts in which these identities manifest. Following this, he proposes the notion of the “Nollywood persistent identity system,” which exposes Nollywood film music’s relations to culture, its practitioners and audience, and academia. Sylvanus’s article implicitly includes film music (as the so-called “new classical music”) in the definition of “new music.”

The three contributions that follow fall under the umbrella of reflection on collaborations. Esther Marié Pauw explores Paulo de Assis’s idea of the artistic researcher as “operator” in a reflection on her performance of the South African composer Michael Blake’s *Umngqokolo* (2018) for solo alto flute. She uses the notion of “the strain of the voice” as an entry point to her reflection and relates it to her playing, and hearing *umngqokolo* singing and the voice of Debussy’s *Syrinx* in Blake’s score. Jaco Meyer considers the roles and levels of recognition of collaborators, and the nomenclature associated with collaboration, in his discussions of thirteen collaborative artistic events, most of which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa. Additionally, he reflects on the role of music at art exhibition openings and auction previews.

Hannah Strong’s book review of David F. Garcia’s *Listening for Africa: Freedom, Modernity, and the Logic of Black Music’s African Origins* (2017) is the final contribution. This review is the only contribution that considers the music of the African diaspora, which I mostly excluded to delimit the focus and not to suggest that their music is not “African” or “from Africa.” However, it brings forth questions with which I leave the reader: how can one define the difference between Black music, African music, and music from Africa, and who can lay claim to these terms? Furthermore, when does this music qualify as “new music,” as the term is currently understood in the West?