TAIPEI REMIX
MICHELLE OUTRAM

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Taipei Remix | A Song Cycle

The title *Taipei Remix* refers to my time as the 2013 City of Perth, Taipei Artist Village resident. The nine songs are responses to experiences and materials gathered this year, in Taiwan and further afield.

Song Titles and Descriptions

1. 月眉 Yuemei - Hakka Women Singing with 高雄 Kaohsiung Images

In most villages we spoke with the old men about the history of the village, but in this case the most senior person was a woman. She was generous and irreverent and asked to know if I was a man or woman. We could not speak with her directly as she only speaks Hakka and Japanese, but I very much wanted to.

2. Taiwan Pop – 專輯 LOVE! from the Album 田馥甄 to Hebe

This song was chosen by my Mandarin teacher Andrea Kao – a young woman who loves language and teaching and who I gradually came to know during my two months in Taiwan in April and September.

3. Improvisation

Improvisation is one strand of my practice that often, in my daily life, exists alone. Sometimes just for myself in the studio. Sometimes with others watching. It is not random, but an expression of the interests, training and experiences I have accumulated. This song will be a dance. It will be presented unaccompanied.

4. Don't have to be a Mountain

Everything keeps changing. We stand up only to fall. We fall only to stand. We stand up to face each moment, each other and ourselves.

I created this song from a performance I made in the Scottish highlands as part of a Body/ Landscape workshop led by Frank van de Ven. The video was shot on a mountain during a day-long walk and was shown as part of a live performance at 2am in a cow shed!

5. 微遠 虎山 – Miculture Foundation, Hushan
[literally translated: Micro Macro, Tiger Mountain]

This video was shot at MiCulture Foundation, a performance venue on the edge of Taipei. It was formally a temple – the god is taking a well-earned break in a storage shed. I had planned to make a public performance there at sunset on my final Saturday in Taipei, but had to cancel due to a predicted typhoon. Instead I went there the previous day and made performances for camera. This one is facing away from the temple toward the mountain.

6. 小林村 – Xiaolin Village

This song represents one of the most profound experiences I have ever had. When I went to see the distaster area four years after Typhoon Morakot, I didn't understand from the information I had access to at the time, just what I was going to see and experience.

This song and the following one are my responses.

7. Valley

What starts on the mountain ends in the valley. What starts as a mountain ends as a valley.

What I had, without being able to immediately understand though language, were strong impressions. Later I came to other understandings though stories. Stories retold in translation, half-told, mis-told, mythologised and those, perhaps existing only in dreams.

8. Sea

Finally we reach the sea. This song is dedicated to two special far-away friends. Alexia who has been in my life a very long time and has kindly allowed me to use an unmastered song, 1633 in Villa Medici, from her forthcoming second album (as *A Seated Craft*). Also to Chao who shared his thoughts with me one night driving on a mountain outside Taipei in a typhoon.

9. Baïlèro by Canteloube

Those last days in Taipei were very full. I went to see a butoh performance by a new Taipei-based company then stayed to watch two film of the works of Tatsumi Hijikata, 'the father of Butoh'. These films can not be seen outside Japan which is a great shame.

The music is a piece I first heard used by De Quincey Co. in a performance in Sydney many years ago, but that day in Taipei I found it formed the major structural element of one of the Hijikata works. It also triggered one of those old/new revelations for me, that we need not tiptoe around cultural material all the time in relation to the question of otherness. And that sometimes things just work.

I know I am not Hijikata and do not mean to be, but I wanted to share something of this with you in a different way.

Biographies

Michelle Outram lives in both Perth and London. She creates work that integrates performance and media in non-traditional performance places.

Michelle has just completed a residency at the Taipei Artist Village funded by the City of Perth following a collaboration with photographer Manuel Vason and the Truth Department making images for a book about Welsh poet Margaret Sandbach. This year Michelle was the improvisor in residence at the innaugural Cornwall International Improvisation Festival. She also participated in Rosalind Crisp's three-week Summer Lab at the Atelier de Paris, Carolyn Carlson; spent a week with in residence at the Mark Tomkins studio, Arbecey, France with eight improvisors; and began collaborating with live artist Helen Spackman.

Over the past several years she has developed a practice using archival materials and improvisation to question the idea of history and memory as stable, and to show potential for thought and change. Projects include: *Not the Sound Bite!* (2006,07,08), a fellowship at the NFSA (2007) and *The PNG Work* (research and developmentm 2005-2011).

She has collaborated as a video/projection designer with London-based Shabnam Shabazi as well as Brazilian choreographer Marcela Levi for the London 2012 Festival. She has also worked with Nikki Heywood, Eleanor Brickhill, Marnie Orr, Platform 27, Anne Walton, Sarah Neville, Janette McGinty, Joey Ruigrok and Eric Kuhlmann. Between 2001 and 2004 Michelle managed and directed/facilitated as well as performed with performance installation group Shagging Julie.

Michelle facilitates workshops in improvisation and collaborating across disciplines. She has lectured at ECU in the Contemporary Arts (2009/10) and mentored other artists. Michelle holds an honours degree (first class) in Performance Studies from the University of Sydney and has worked as an arts manager and book keeper at Performance Space (Sydney), Omeo Dance, CIA Studios (Perth) and for the WASh program (establishing connections between WA and Shanghai).

Peter Dreisiger is a Perth-based activist and technologist who is becoming more involved in the arts providing software, hardware and networking solutions and support for artists wishing to engage with digital technologies. Peter and Simon Wise created a system for the Spatula Collective (2012) for live, roaming broadcast as well as working together (mostly over Skype) with Michelle Outram to develop the initial working Raspberry Pi projection system for Shabnam Shabazi's Body House at Chelsea Theatre, London (2012). Peter is a committee member of Perth's hackerspace, 'The Artifactory'. He has worked as a Systems Scientist at BHP Billiton and as a Senior Systems Engineer and Analyst at the Defence Science and Technology Organisation. He holds bachelor degrees in Engineering and Science from UWA, both with honours.

Simon Wise began his career running a student radio studio station. Since then has worked as the Technical Coordinator of the Performance Space and then as a freelance Production Manager, Lighting Designer, Set Builder and Venue Technician. This included long term collaborations with many of Sydney's leading performance ensembles and production managing several national and international tours (with Performing Lines and others). He set up a video editing facility andw worked increasingly with multimedia. He was the Technical Facilitator of *Time_Place_Space* (2002-06), a 5-year program of annual 2-week residential workshops exploring hybrid practice with 20 artists and 5 facilitators each year. After this he started working with interactive software, creating systems for installations and performances. He moved to Perth and is now in the final semester of a degree at UWA, with majors in Computation and Pure Maths. His work with Michelle includes lighting many of Shagging Julie's shows, building the installation for *Not the Sound Bite!*, creating the multimedia system and lighting for *Lucky Town*, helping create the Interdisciplinary Collaboration Workshop in Denmark and the WASh initiative in Shanghai as well as collaborating on *The PNG Work*.

Images:
Cover: *Hakka women/Kaohsiung Night Market,* 2013
P1-2: *Driving along the river bed – boulders brought down by the massive landslide,* 2013.
P3-4: *Tea plantation,* 2013.
P7-8: *Da Shu village,* 2013.
P9: *Yang Chang Guei from Chayama,* 2013.