

Shared Experience: Through a Case Study of Classical Music Practice in Modern Cuba

Rieko TANAKA

1. Introduction

Using an ethnographic approach¹, this paper explores the case of practice of Western “classical music”² in the Republic of Cuba according to shared experiences among people that form the basis of community and society. Here, we focus on shared modes of behavior³ and artistic experiences⁴ regarding the creation of classical music, appreciation, and politics, and discuss how these factors will lead to the creation of classical music with the huge social changes that have occurred in Cuba⁵.

Here, classical music is defined as music originating in the western music style, such as the works of Bach and Chopin played by quartets and orchestras, and practiced widely all over the world. Most classical music in Latin America spread from musical practice in churches. Musical nationalism spread along with subsequent encounters with European modernism as an art movement. Thus, this musical practice indicates their own development. However, it is difficult to understand this music practice based on existing notions of “art” and “Cuban culture.”

This is first because the concept of “classical music,” which has been influenced by the deep-rooted view of Eurocentrism, deals with non-western classical music in Cuba only peripherally. Second, because the concept of “music” presupposes the authenticity theory based on the scheme, territory = ethnicity = culture (music), it cannot be applied to this music. Although Cuban music has origins in the West, it includes both Western and African musical elements as well as modern North American style influences, and has incorporated Russian musical education.

In addition, Caribbean studies emphasize African roots rather than culture. This article deals with classical music originating in Europe. Thus, existing post-colonial theory and black culture theory studies⁶, which include “Afro-Cubanism,” can clarify only a very limited aspect of Cuban classical music. Furthermore, it is possible that this music is regarded as propaganda art under socialism, and is treated in a stereotypical manner⁷.

In accordance with the problems described above, this study clarifies the dynamic aspect of Cuban culture by transcending the dichotomies of ethno music/classical music (or popular music/classical music) and black culture/white culture, and by reconsidering classical music as “practice” rather than an art form⁸.

2. Ethnographic background

2.1. Popular/artistic tradition

Cuban music is based mainly on the western musical form and Cuban folk music elements (rhythm, theme, and musical instrumentation). As native cultures in Cuba disappeared earlier than other Latin America countries, a variety of elements were assimilated into Cuban music.

In one example, Cuban “son” is perceived to be a mixture of Spanish guitar and African percussion. A great deal of unique Cuban music has developed, including “rumba,” “trova,” “danzón,” “mambo,” “cha-cha,” “nueva trova,” “salsa,” etc. The music had a great influence not only on Latin American music, but also European music, as Cuban music was prevalent in Europe in the 19th century, e.g., the French composer, Georges Bizet, introduced the rhythm of Cuban habanera into his music.

The tradition of popular music has been especially influential in Cuban music. “Buena Vista Social Club” achieved great commercial success, and a number of Cuban musicians, including Silvio Rodríguez, Pablo Milanés, Chucho Valdés, Eliades Ochoa, etc., have seen worldwide acceptance.

Since the 16th century, Cuba has cultivated a strong classical music tradition, including music practiced at churches. Moreover, a great deal of emphasis has been placed not only on classical music but also on classical ballet. For example, Alicia Alonso, who is known as the first non-western dancer to dance at the Opéra de Paris, has established the domain of classical ballet in Cuba. The practice of classical ballet has since been an important national effort in Cuba. This coordinates with the developing movement of classical music, such as the creation of classical music and establishment of the National Ballet Company Orchestra.

In addition, Leo Brouwer is a notable Cuban classical musical artist. Brouwer studied music in North America, and although influenced by experimental music, he composed for guitar, which is not a popular instrument in classical music. He developed trans-border musical practice and established music called “nueva trova” with Silvio Rodríguez and others that obtained public support and has become popular.

Thus, musical practice in Cuba is essentially hybrid and has a strong popular/classical tradition.

2.2. Multiple spheres of Cuban classical music

To focus on the characteristics of Cuban music outlined above, it is necessary to examine multiple spheres of Cuban music, as it is difficult to understand them only in terms of the relationship between Cuba and the West.

First, the interactions with North American music and musicians are important to the classical music of Cuba. The Cuban composer, José Ardévol, contributed greatly to the development of classical music in Cuba, exchanging letters with composers from North America and inviting musicians to visit and perform in Cuba. The composer, Jorge López Marín, who is a leader of modern musical practice in Cuba, was fascinated with North American music and stated that the influence of Gershwin continued in his work⁹.

Musical exchange with ex-Communist countries cannot be discounted, as López Marín had a long experience of music in Russia. Many musicians who later became world-famous conductors visited Cuba in the 1930s and 1940s, including Munch and Karajan, at the symphony orchestra of Havana, which was reorganized after the Cuban revolution in 1959 as the National Symphony Orchestra of Cuba with more

than 200 participating musicians.

The Cuban musical education system was based on the former Soviet Union's techniques and classical music education system. The education system of ISA (Instituto Superior de Arte) was modeled after the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, and had visits from many Russian teachers every year since its foundation. In addition, excellent students were allowed to study at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. For example, the Cuban composer, Aldo Lopez Gavilan, performs and teaches in Havana, making use of his experience of studying in Russia. Thus, older musicians tend to retain the performance style of the former Soviet Union.

In addition, popular music has a significant influence in the daily life of Cuba. Leo Brouwer created a great deal of film music and established "nueva trova" with Silvio Rodríguez and others, influenced by American experimental music. The performance of the Nussa family incorporates the features of classical music, Jazz, and popular music. It could be argued that these practices of musicians clearly demonstrate the multiple spheres of classical music practice in Cuba.

2.3. Musical policy and modern practice

In contrast to the musicians in Cuba, the Cuban art policy has a number of distinctive points in that the education system that developed after the revolution aimed toward special education for children gifted in classical music and to provide equal opportunity for education. There are a number of state-funded and provincial musical educational institutes, in addition to the largest institutes, the ISA (University of Arts) and ENA (National Art School), under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture in Cuba. Cuban education is free from both entrance fees and tuition fees. Moreover, in the case of ISA, students can live in a dormitory on the campus if their application is accepted, and a limited number of musical instruments can be lent to the students.

Examinations are taken according to the will of the student and recommendations of their instructors. However, especially in the case of elementary education, the institutes may judge the adequacy of children and discuss their majors. This is because students can major in several subjects at the same time at an art institute and can change their majors after enrollment to gradually decide on their specialized subjects. Although this education system seems to provide generous assistance, it is difficult for many students to aim for the art institutes and pass the examinations.

Coupled with the opportunity for musical education, flourishing musicians often have experience of formal musical education. Moreover, artists that are recognized as members of UNEAC (National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba) are granted a variety of rights to be supplied with daily commodities, paid compensation for performances, etc.

On the other hand, the draw of international musical festivals brings benefits to Cuba, which has economic problems, and leads to immediate acquisition of foreign currency. A number of North American tours are set up for the International Jazz Festival, which is held every December, and there are always large numbers of tour buses in front of theaters.

However, the problems in the practice of classical music in Cuba are that the level of performance is reduced because of the migration of powerful performers for economic and political reasons, and the actual conditions include run-down theaters and failure of musical instruments. Due to these problems, major

theaters have undergone renovation; the National Theater completed its renovation in 2012, and the largest theater, Teatro Garcia Lorca, underwent renovation and re-opened in 2016 in time for a historic visit by then US President Obama.

Considering the above, there are four main aspects in the historical background of classical music in Cuba: (1) exchanges with North American composers; (2) visits from influential musicians from ex-Communist countries; (3) introduction of techniques and education system modeled after Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory; and (4) recreation of a number of new musical styles by using traditional styles, such as *nueva trova*, despite the influence of contemporary music.

These distinctive points can shed light on the characteristics of classical music in Cuba as having multiple aspects, rather than as stereotypical and homogenous systematization by a socialist regime.

2.4. People of Cuban music

From an ethnographic viewpoint, these multiple ways and recent social changes emerge either consciously or unconsciously in experience in the daily lives of people in Cuba. For example, playing music is increasingly becoming a means to earn money for both the state and individuals. The musician's hands are changing from the hands that play to those that also receive payment directly after the performance.

Large numbers of tour buses bring crowds of tourists to listen to music at the theaters scattered around Havana. After the crowds have gone, people living nearby can witness the renovation of the theaters from the concert earnings. Thus, people living in Havana cannot avoid experiencing such social changes associated with music.

Although in many cases, people attend private classes to prepare for entrance examinations, many people must abandon their musical studies due to economic pressures. Furthermore, in some cases enrolled students may not progress to upper grade because of great pressure to perform music, while others may cease to be involved in national artistic activities because of a perceived lack of support from ISA after graduation.

Finally, it is useful to focus on the people involved in classical music, i.e., music students, musicians, and music lovers.

In Cuba, musicians have a high social position, and music students are seen as "elites." For example, Mr. C, a student of ISA (male, in his 20s, guitar major), had the following conversation with Mr. B from Mexico over their lunch break.

"(Mr. B. In my own country) If I tell someone that I study music, they say 'so what?'. I think that means that we cannot make a living at all by music if we study music, so they want to ask what I am going to do with it. I actually felt sorry for my mother. However, after I came here (Havana), they say 'You are great.' It is nothing special in Cuba. Especially, the students of ISA are elites. There are major differences. We have possibilities. You (Mr. B) will never know¹⁰".

This positioning of music students as elites has a favorable influence on Cuban parents toward having their children learn music.

The elevated social position of musicians is not just limited to today. People survived with music during

the revolution, and it is now seen as an effective way to acquire foreign currency. Ms. P, a pianist and instructor at ISA, said “We manage to survive with a house, car because I am a musician.” In contrast, Mr. R, a composer, said “I need more and more music.” Especially, he complained that he is frequently asked “What is Cuban music?” He stresses “All of what I do is Cuban music, and my own music. I am Cuban.”

These interviews indicate that being a musician in Cuba is an effective way of life for an individual, and also that it is not only a means to acquire material possessions but is also a support for life. However, this can change depending on the social situation.

There is a convention that music lovers connect classical music with their experiences and memories. Ms. A (female in her 70s), a retired doctor living in Fontanar area, explained that she used to go to classical music concerts, but that she cannot afford it now. One day she was invited to a concert. She put on lipstick and a dress suit with a floral pattern that she used to wear often but that she now does not usually wear. On the way to the theater by car with a neighbor, pianist Ms. P (female in her 60s), and the author, she said “I went to listen to the soloist who is going to perform today some years ago. She was excellent at that time.” At regular concerts, the seats on the second floor of the theater are usually occupied by people associated with the world of Cuban music, such as musicians, critics, music students, music lovers, etc. Ms. A also went to the second floor where she found her friends.

Classical music in Cuba is accepted as a means of earning money and as a way of life. This ethnographic background focuses on the influence of classical music practice over the whole of Cuban society. It has many little known historical stories¹¹, however, this paper focuses on more than just such aspects.

3. Case Studies I

3.1. “¡No oigo nada! (I can’t hear anything!)”

I encountered the following situation during an “orchestral direction” lesson (practical skill) at the National Art University of Cuba. The teaching method itself is not so remarkably different from others. The orchestra part, which is arranged for piano duet, is played with two electric pianos by two assistant pianists. Students practice how to lead members and the music of the orchestra: a student stands on the podium placed between the two pianos, and moves his/her arms with a baton, checking his/her form in a mirror on the opposite wall. The professor sits near the mirror and gives advice about their performance.

<Case 1>

A student, Diana, stood on the podium in the classroom. Professors Miguel, José, and Esperanza, two pianists, two other students, and the author were also in the room. They were performing the four movements of Shostakovich’s symphony No. 1. Diana sometimes looked at the musical score, which was placed on the podium. She moved her arms up and down, left and right. She sometimes stopped because she lost her timing with two pianos and could not play well together. During and after her performance, Professor Miguel raised his voice, “¡No! I can’t hear anything! (¡No oigo nada!)” implying that he could not “hear the music” from her performance.

Suddenly, the tones of one electric piano were interrupted due to electrical trouble. Everyone turned toward the pianist, José. At the same time, José banged on the electronic piano with his fist. Then, the electricity returned and the sound came back. A shrill and dry sound of percussion

resounded from somewhere in turn. A percussion student probably had a lesson next door. Most students practiced here with the door open (even if you closed the door, the sound would leak).

When Diana's performance was over, Professor Miguel said "look" and then started conducting the electric pianos himself. The music approached the part where Diana's timing was off. However, with Miguel conducting, there was no problem. José's upper body moved to the music. Although it is difficult to discern between the sound of an electric piano when it is played expressively, with the body, or not, José performed with various finger movements, ranging from delicate to sharp. In addition, they finished the last dramatic part of this work in powerful unison. As soon as they had finished, Professor Miguel raised his voice and said excitedly "See!? This! This! (¡Viste! ¡Eso! ¡Eso!)." Diana and the other students nodded several times.

3.2. "Shared experience" of music

Here, it seems that everyone who attended the lesson experienced the music together; in this sense, we could call this situation a "shared experience" of music. In fact, I also nodded instinctively along with Diana and the other students, when Professor Miguel said "See!?" After this experience, Diana began conducting well, without stopping in the places where previously she could not play well together with good timing. Furthermore, Diana and the other students that experienced the music together achieved the best passing marks by all ten judges in the final examination for orchestral conducting. In this sense, shared music brought about these changes.

However, questions remain regarding what the shared experience actually did for the students. What kind of music did we experience, even if it was interrupted by electrical faults and disturbance from elsewhere? Why did the two pianists, Orlando and Esperanza, perform so well with Professor Miguel's conducting? What did we receive through the music and why did we nod? Finally, why did "changes" occur after the experience?

This paper tackles these questions. This paper explores the anthropological possibility of understanding shared experiences of music, particularly with regard to classical music in Cuba. Through this paper, I would also like to connect the discussion of music with the concepts of sense and body that underlie the shared experience of music. Despite practicing Western traditional classical music, either subconsciously or consciously, it becomes classical music in Cuba by sharing it in the development of contemporary Cuban society.

4. Case studies II

4.1. Diana's hands

Case 1 reminds us that the experience of music involves elements other than sound. For example, a conductor does not actually produce sonic instructions when conducting, but rather depends on gesture. In Case 1, electronic failure silenced the performance, and this too influenced our experience. Therefore, music is not just a matter of the ear, but the entire corporeal experience¹².

Let us focus on the process of this "change" after the class, taking into account the "whole" of the experience, to explore what happened in the "shared experience" of music. First, let us look at Diana's hands. In

the class, Professor Miguel often said that players could not understand the music from Diana's hands. He said:

"For example, during her conducting, her fingers opened too much. She has long fingers, so if she acts with such form, she can't catch the music and it runs away from these spaces of her hands."

This implies that the music exists in proper form and its "delivery" depends upon correct hand form. However, when Diana performed well, her hand form did not actually change. Even photographs taken during the performance do not show a distinct difference in hand form. José, the pianist who played under Diana's conducting said:

"Before, it was hard to play with Diana, but during the exam, I thought nothing of it, it was fine."

Here, José clearly understood the music from Diana's conducting, without a change in the form of her hands. As started above, Diana and the other students achieved the best marks in the final exam. After the exam, Diana said:

"I think, now, I understand this music very well. However, I can't explain at all how and what I studied in the class. I think I have just received Miguel's 'passion' for music."

Their performance changed and they understood the music together. Diana's hands functioned within the music, and they shared the sense recognizing the music through her hands. In short, this case shows that a "shared experience" of music occurred, and was dependent on much more than visual hand gestures.

4.2. Skilled or unskilled?

I would like to pick up the case about the orchestra performance. This orchestra gives a performance every Sunday. For this, they have rehearsals five days a week, from Tuesday to Saturday. The permanent director is José, and sometimes a guest conductor, either from a Cuban or abroad, comes to perform with them. This schedule does not vary regardless of whether José is the director. When a soloist joins an orchestra for a program, he/she participates from the third day. In addition, a public performance is ready by Sunday. All of these performances take place at the National Theater.

I sometimes hear markedly different comments about this orchestra. "Their performance is the best," "they are unskilled," etc. Audiences sometimes respond with a round of ardent applause. However, the situation is not as simple as good/bad or skilled/unskilled, because the experience of the audience is complicated as is that of the orchestra, e.g., diversity of instruments, integration as an orchestra, ability of the conductor, reproducibility of music, sound pressure, excitement in the hall, etc. Here, let us try to explore the origins of such difference in the orchestra's emotion regarding their performance.

<Case 2>

After rehearsals on the first and second days, José, the conductor, said that it did not work well, it

was not good. Although at the end of the rehearsal, José tried to run through the work, they could not. The orchestra could not play well together with the speed variations, irregular times, and dynamics, which are written on the score. So, the performance stopped several times with José calling for their attention. Finally, José requested that the orchestra “Do it well tomorrow because a soloist is coming.”

On the third day, the solo violinist came and performed the work of Berber with the orchestra. At the section where they could not play well together yesterday, the members of the orchestra glanced at the movement of the conductor and soloist several times. They followed the music, although they were a little late, and they gradually played well together. Maria, a cellist, held the fingerboard more precisely. Viviana, a violinist, showed improved bowing technique, controlling it more carefully. At the section in which the solo violin takes a short break, the orchestra’s sound grew...they performed until the end of the piece without stopping. When they finished the first play through, the members of the orchestra and José offered the violin soloist applause.

After the rehearsal, I asked Maria and Viviana some questions about these changes, which I had captured on video. They said that they did not feel any technical changes. In addition, “We were excited playing today. We really love to play with him. You too, right?” On the day of the concert, the audience gave great applause. Joao, a musicologist who was joining the concert, said “today’s performance was very nice.” The following day, three students and Professor Miguel were talking about the concert. “Did you go to the concert? It was incredible.”

Generally, the orchestra’s skill is divided into three aspects according to musical value¹³.

The first is “personal skill,” which means that the players sound with the right pitch and timing written on the score. The second is “ensemble skill,” which is separate from personal skill and means that they play with the whole orchestra, interacting with each instrument. The third is the fusion of those two skills.

However, we can see additional skills in Case 2. When the violin soloist attended the rehearsal the first time, the orchestra changed compared with the previous day. For example, the cellist’s finger form gradually became more controlled and she played with correct pitch. The orchestra performed with proper stress and expression, and therefore came to communicate and follow the soloist. After the practice, orchestra members remarked that it was fun playing with the soloist.

In this case, personal and ensemble skills are connected, and neither can function a priori. Here, their body, its ability, and sense, moved to the music and changed within the “shared experience.”

4.3. David’s added sound

The next case is about the pianist, David, and is slightly different from the two cases outlined above. This case indicates another kind of dynamism of “shared experience” in the form of “added sound.”

<Case 3>

David is a young assistant pianist of two music schools. When I met him for the first time, he was

playing in the practice room in the school, using his powerful low tones. I was passing near the practice room, and could hear the resonant tones from outside. After he finished his performance, I remarked to David on his powerful left hand (he was playing the low tones with his left hand). He responded “I added the tone...to the musical score. The proper way, is like this” (and he played the second Mi minor from the bottom). “However, this is my way” (and he added the lowest Mi minor).”

David invited me to his house several times when he practiced the piano. Sometimes he added some tones from the bottom to the upper as is “his way.” He played Etudes of Scriabin Op. 8. At the end, he followed the score, and played the last harmony five times with accents dramatically. In the act of finishing, the deep-fried sizzling of croquettes which his mother was cooking at that time sound all over the room, like an accompaniment. “Hey! Mamy!” David shouted. His mother, Marcia, was cooking. “Her sound of deep-frying is played in perfect timing. She is a genius.”

Another time, I attend a solo piano concert by David in Old Havana. This concert included pieces by Chopin, Scriabin, Liszt, and Lecuona. Sometimes “his own sound” was audible confirming what he had previously told me. One audience member listening with eyes closed, another was shaking his body following David’s movement, another was wiping tears away with a handkerchief. After the concert, the audience members talked with David to express their impressions. David said to me, “Even in this, of course, I heard the sound of croquettes during the performance!”

He usually plays tones that are not present in the score. He only became aware of this habit when it was pointed out by his teacher when he was a student. Although he was careful about this habit for exams or competitions, he likes to play in this style. “I think this is “Scriabin’s style,” don’t you think so?.....Especially in Cuba, there are not good Steinway pianos¹⁴.” He said that he added such tones “for Scriabin.”

Case 3 shows various phases of the “shared experience” of music. David and his audience experienced the music together at the concert. During the practice in David’s house, he and his mother shared the music and he usually experienced the music with his mother’s cooking sounds. David and his teacher shared Scriabin’s music together. In addition, he shares the experience of music with Scriabin within the music.

This shared experience creates the concrete “tones” that jump out from the score and join the lived experience of music shared by players and audience together, in its many forms (tears, joy, etc.).

In this case, “shared experience” accumulated, and incurred important musical changes brought about by the physical gestures (body) and feelings (sense) of the players. Cases 1 and 2 also appear to include such accumulation of experience.

5. Findings

5.1. Findings

This paper focused on the shared experience of music, as illustrated by three cases. The most important findings are summarized below.

In Case 1, in the orchestra direction class, students experienced the music together, despite imperfect conditions. We called this a shared experience of music. In this process, the conducting form of Diana’s

hands had little impact on the shared music. On the other hand, the forms of Maria and Viviana, the violinist and cellist, respectively, did change according to their experience of music played together. With the cumulative “shared experience” of the pianist David and his audiences, what was written on the score and the actual performance differed, and likewise, the experiences of the audience also varied.

This shows that, within the shared experience of music, people are led by their own direction to the music and accumulation of experience. Classical music in Cuba includes all of these dynamics. In addition, this may explain the vastly differing opinions expressed about the orchestra.

5.2. Going on the road, “shared experience,” within Havana

I focused on subtle aspects of experiencing classical music. However, such stories do not belong solely to musicians, and the “experience of music” is one of the most important aspects of Cuban culture. In addition, “shared experience” understandably occurs throughout Havana in a visceral manner. By examining the relations between the experience of music and daily life, we can learn more about both, and about how they influence each other.

I would like to present one final story.

Daniel and Joan are “bicitaxi” drivers¹⁵ and also dentists in Havana¹⁶. They told me that they use both decided taxi routes and their own routes. When I heard this, I thought that they may be taking precautions to avoid damaging their tires, because the roads are bumpy and full of holes. Several times I tried driving his bicycle, taking care to avoid the holes: “No, no, ¡directo! (direct) ¡directo! (direct).” He said, “Let’s go straight along the road!”

I concluded that Daniel’s understanding of the word “directo” (direct) was different to mine. Here, I do not intend to read any special meaning into this expression, and am not necessarily connecting to the daily experience. However, the body that faces the holes in the road is surely related, in its living sense, to the body experiencing music.

According to the English Jazz musician, Derek Bailey, “one of the things that inspires me in making any gesture, musically and theoretically, is its relation with daily life in which there is no such thing as an exclusion...The sort of improvisation I am interested in is the sort that everyone does in their lives¹⁷.” This suggests that the music appears within the experience. The experience of holes in the road is probably not the same for Daniel as it is for me or another person, so we need to draw within the experience¹⁸.

The experience “shared” in living among people is a fundamental aspect for understanding their musical practice, such as “its relation to daily life in which there is no such thing as an exclusion” and “what everyone does in their lives.” Understanding the importance of shared experience within the context of music in Havana using an anthropological approach, as in this essay, can also shed light on ways to interpret culture more broadly.

[Notes]

- 1 This paper is based on my anthropological research in Cuba from 2012 to 2014. Fictitious names are given for the participants.
- 2 The terminology of “classical music” is used in both traditions of popular music and Western music (cf. Carpentier 1961). On the other hand, this situation also shows one aspect of “becoming” classical music in Cuba. In his ethnography, the Sociologist Hennion (1993) successfully depicted details of becoming music from the viewpoint of music as mediation. “Becoming” is a concept of seizing modern art and focusing on more fundamental “power” and “movement” of art before formalization of “art” and “art work” (cf. Deleuze 1983, Tanaka 2014). In this paper, we focus on such movement regarding classical music in Cuba.
- 3 The anthropological approach focuses on the topic of behavior including “sense” and “body” as methods to understand human behavior. In this way, “hearing” is not an issue that relates only to the “ear” or “sounds,” but is a more physical experience (cf. Ingold 2000).
- 4 Dewey (1934) attempted to describe the “experience” of art, which is based on particular works and practices. There are similar perspectives about the experience. However, it is different from his pragmatic viewpoint that we will follow an event “in” the experience of music. That is, the idea of the “experience” of music is based on multiplicity in that several types of subjectivity cooperate together. We are able to find a kind of family resemblance between this understanding and the process of experience of music as “cooperative creation,” on which the sociologist Schutz (1964) focused.
- 5 (Weinreb 2009).
- 6 (Ortiz 1940).
- 7 (Ardévol 1966).
- 8 Many anthropologists have focused on an importance of art or music in their studies (cf: Bateson 1972, Feld 1982). For example, recent research indicates that the idea of agency over art is widely used as an approach (Gell 1998) to explore the convergence of art and anthropology (Schneider 2006). See Tanaka 2014 for further discussion of those anthropological trends.
- 9 From the interview, August 1st, 2013.
- 10 From the interview, October, 2012.
- 11 (cf: Cabrera 1979).
- 12 This way of “sense” seems to be similar of the conductor’s “score reading” in the orchestra. When conductors read a full score containing all orchestra parts, they do not read it vertically as an accumulation of each part of instruments, but grasp horizontally as an entire flow of music to catch the condensed whole instantly. Conductors often emphasize the importance of exercise to play the piano with the orchestra score to understand instinctively which sounds of the orchestra are more important to conduct.
- 13 This explanation is based on my personal interviews with some conductors in the orchestra direction class at the art school in Cuba.
- 14 Steinway & Sons, also known as Steinway, is a famous piano brand especially used by top professionals.
- 15 “Bicitaxi” is the Cuban style rikshaw, a common means of transportation in Old Havana, which has three tires, a double-seat, and tarpaulin canopy, like a small horse-drawn wagon.
- 16 People usually have two or more jobs due to low salaries.
- 17 “Of course, I do not mean daily life transformed into music but in certain respects there are parallels between music and daily life. Improvisation starts at the moment it is needed and it is always in a context in which there are fixed points of reference” (Bailey 1992).
- 18 (Ingold 2000).

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