che Verbrecher Orpheus („die blinden ... nach ... der tat") bleibt allein zurück. Seine anima, die Perkussionistin, macht hektische fliehende Schritte hörbar, bevor des Orpheus' Seele auf ewige Wanderschaft gehend akustisch in der Ferne verschwindet.

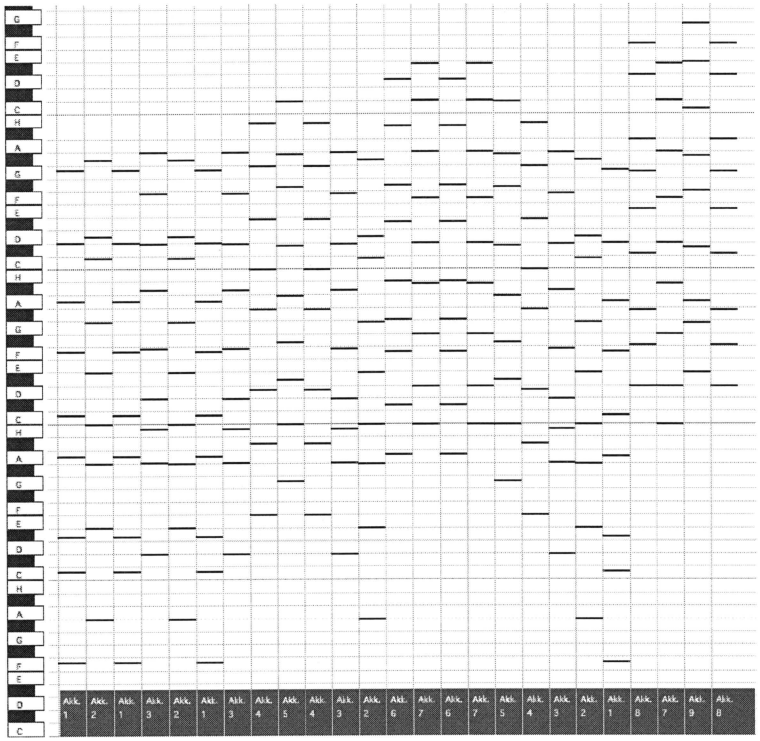

Abb. 17: Grafische Darstellung der Harmonik des gesamten Hoquetus

Georg Hajdu

Composition as Construction of Cultural Identity

"Cultural construct - the idea that the characteristics people attribute to such social categories as gender, illness, death, status of women, and status of men is culturally defined"
(Definitions of Anthropological Terms;
http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/anth370/gloss.html#C)

"Cultural identity is the identity or feeling of belonging to a group. It is part of a person's self-conception and self-perception and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture."
(Cultural identity; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_identity)

1. Introduction

Music is (besides maybe language and clothing) a major contributor to group identity, particularly among youths. Each social group has a strong feeling of in-music and out-music. This extends to ethnic groups and nations[1]. While music historians can find traces of national musical distinctions in cultures as early as ancient Greece, among the most striking examples are the keyboard pieces Bach dubbed French Suites or Italian Concerto. What's remarkable about these compositions is that Bach — well aware of national musical characteristics — synthesized a musical style, which could be considered a manifestation of European *globalization* in the Baroque era. In contrast, Romantic composers in Europe such

1 Humans are not the only ones actually that use melody to distinguish between group identity: It has been shown that birds and whales have dialects, specific to the group they live in.

as Smetana, Holst, Mussorgsky, Liszt, Wagner or Debussy (or Villa-Lobos or Gershwin in the new world) were preoccupied with creating a body of National music, a tendency lasting well into the 20th C. Hungarian composer Béla Bartók built on this tradition but objectified it by establishing and employing the methods of ethnomusicological field studies. His music once again synthesized various musical identities into a coherent musical language, which served as a role model for younger composers such as Ligeti or Lutosławski. With the pendulum swinging back, the 20th century became *the* era of objectivation. Concurrently to or directly motivated by the ideas of the Bauhaus, composers since the 1920s were striving to establish abstract rules such as 12-tone music or, after 1945, total serialism. This drive became more urgent in the Western world after the devastating outcome of WWII leading to an abstract musical style occasionally called the *International* style by some, as it was the "prescribed" style amongst classical composers in large parts of the Western world and also was adopted by composers in areas such as Russia and East Asia.

Technological advances contributed to the spread of musical styles around the entire globe, and not just in (contemporary) classical music. Jazz, swing, rock and roll etc. have been playing everywhere on the radio since the 1930's and consumed by listeners on all continents[2]. This globalization of music throughout the 2nd half of the 20th was precipitated by the advent of satellites and the Internet. In the meantime, in classical contemporary music, a new style, or better, attitude started to emerge: Post-modernism was defined by composers such as B.A. Zimmermann who coined the term "Kugelgestalt der Zeit", an idea that time is like a sphere where past, present and future are conceptually unified into one coherent structure. Marshall McLuhan's notion of the collapse of time and space ("time has ceased, space has vanished. We now live in a global village", McLuhan & Fiore, 1967) best describes the current

2 Yet, paradoxically, national labeling was still manifest such as in the term *British Invasion* referring to an influx of British pop music into the USA, the homeland of rock and roll.

state of the global musical mind which is also a digital one[3]. In a global village, people are more defined by class, gender and age than national identity, and new identities are often being constructed artificially by the media as selling points, such as "metrosexual" or "hipster." People also choose group adherence not for geographical, but—borrowing a term from Johann Wolfgang Goethe—for reasons of *Wahlverwandtschaften* (elective affinities). Just like most global cities now feature the same chains of stores with very little local variation, we will encounter subcultures with their typical attire and hairstyle in major metropolises such as New York, London, Berlin, Buenos Aires, Shanghai, Tokyo or Melbourne. And the same applies to the consumption of music.

Confronted with the impact of what I would like to call the *Big Blender,* composers living in the global digital era have the daunting task to construct their own cultural and social identities as their connate ones no longer serve much of a purpose, occasionally a frustrating and stressful endeavor challenging one's psychological integrity.

2. György Ligeti

A lot of my work is a direct response to the questions of identity and I would like to elaborate on this a bit by closely looking at four, male, composers who have been connected both geographically (at least for a while) and by similar interests: György Ligeti, Manfred Stahnke, Clarence Barlow and myself.

Ligeti was born in Romania into a Hungarian-Jewish family and, after surviving the Holocaust and escaping to the West during the Hungarian uprising, lived in and benefitted from a cultural environment with which he was not entirely capable of identifying. His early compositions clearly show an affinity to Bartók whose style he was brilliantly capable of emulating. In the 1950's he slowly shifted away from it and from 1956 on he

3 Though we recently seem to suffer a backlash by a rise of populist national propaganda by those who obviously have been on the loosing end of the digital, i.e. global divide.

embraced unlimited access to new music of the Western hemisphere. There, his first interactions were with Karlheinz Stockhausen with whom he stayed for a while after his flight. For more than 20 years he was one of the leading figures of the international *avant-garde* having introduced and/or revived techniques such as polymeter and micropolyphony ("clocks and clouds") in contemporary music—techniques that were studied and copied by generations of young composers. In the early to mid-1980's, he transitioned once again to a new style, which also touched on the idea of constructing new cultural identities. Allusions to other styles became the leading topic and the idea of synthesizing artificial ethnic genres informed by his encyclopedic knowledge of music from around the globe became a predominant one, such as in the second movement of the Horn trio which he called "a very quick polymetric dance inspired by the various folk music of non-existing people, as if Hungary, Romania and the entire Balkan region were situated somewhere between Africa and the Caribbean."

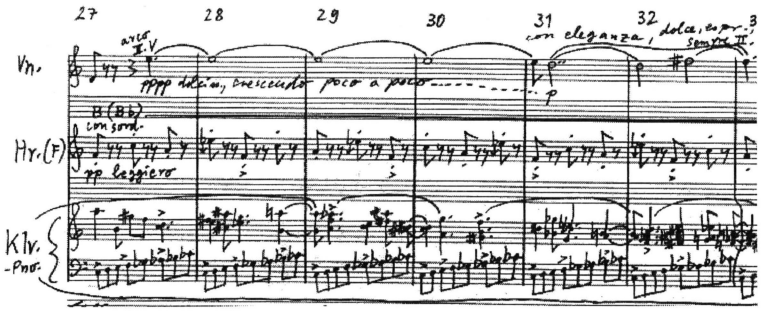

Figure 1. Measure 27-32 of the 2nd movement of the Horn Trio by György Ligeti.

Many of his pieces from this period are characterized by this urge, which is also felt in the works of a number of his students. Much has been written about Ligeti and instead of adding to this body of literature, I would like to shift the focus to Manfred Stahnke who since 1974 was Ligeti's student and later his associate, still attending his seminars up to his retirement in 1989.

3. Manfred Stahnke

Stahnke (see the interview I conducted with him on page 291) is one of the few German composers of his generation who drew incessant inspiration from music of other cultures. Born in 1951, six years after the end of WWII, he had a natural aversion—shared with many German artists of his generation—to anything that could remotely be dubbed *National German* music. As opposed to some of his colleagues (such as Mathias Spahlinger or Claus-Steffen Mahnkopf) who—still inspired by Theodor W. Adorno's music philosophy—turned their efforts into creating music with a clear political agenda, Stahnke embraced music from a distant time or remote location in order to escape the shadows of the recent fascist era:

"Also eigentlich reiste man raus, nicht nur aus dem Ort Europa, sondern aus der Zeit Europa 1900" (thus one would travel not just out of Europe, but also out of Europe of the 1900's).

His interest in microtonal and other types of unusual music was fueled by his natural curiosity manifest since his childhood and later reinforced by his like-minded teacher György Ligeti (whom he describes as part *prima donna*, part scholar/scientist). Stahnke benefitted greatly from a DAAD scholarship, which enabled him to spend a year in the USA. His studies with Ben Johnston turned him on to Harry Partch, the hobo and renegade composer who singlehandedly created music hitherto unheard of, with its novel approach to instrument building and just intonation tuning. Partch himself, though, was inspired by Chinese music and poetry and ancient Greek music theory as well as the teachings of Helmholtz and Kathleen Schlesinger. Stahnke dedicated to this American maverick a piece called *Partch Harp* for harp in just intonation tuning and DX7 II synthesizer tuned to an equidistance scale of his invention with nearly just major thirds, just minor seventh and compressed octaves

known as *cet97* in the Scala Archive[4]. Stahnke's curiosity fell on fertile ground in Ligeti's seminars who, due to his enormous reputation, succeeded in attracting young, like-minded composers willing to share their discoveries. Ligeti also exposed his class of students, whom Stahnke referred to as the *Hamburg school*, to the publications of fractal researcher Heinz-Otto Peitgen and ethonolomusicogists Gerhard Kubik and Simha Arom, just to mention a few.

With the composers of the 1985+ generation of Ligeti students, Stahnke founded the *Ensemble Chaosma* in 1992, in order to disseminate the works and thoughts (Stahnke likes to refer to himself as a *music thinker* rather than a composer) of this particular group of people. One of the performing members of the group, guitarist Seth Josel, is the dedicatee of a piece called Malaita. This composition epitomizes Stahnke's concept of composition as cultural construction: This microtonal piece in 7EDO (division of the octave in 7 equal steps) is based on the pan flute music of the Solomon Islands which has been recorded and studied by Swiss ethnomusicologist Hugo Zemp. Pitch analysis has led Zemp to assume that it was roughly based on an equidistant seven-tone scale, a finding to be taken with a grain of salt as the pitches produced by these flutes are scattered statistically around seven steps. Anyway, written in 1989 Malaita required the use of end-80's cutting edge technology: a MIDI guitar and a sequencer program to sequentially record and play back the four tracks of the composition as well as a sound module such as the DX 7 II capable of rendering microtonal tunings[5]. Hamburg was a good place for such endeavors: Both, the maker of the software Emagic and the European division of the synthesizer company Yamaha were located in close proximity to the city and willing to share their developments with Ligeti's students. To compose this piece, Stahnke, an apt improviser, used a triadic strategy, which he also applied to a number of his

4 http://www.huygens-fokker.org/scala

5 It is said that Ligeti had used his influence to convince Yamaha to implement microtonal tuning tables in the second release of the DX 7.

more recent pieces: Improvisation, transcription and editing. This approach has been facilitated by the advances of digital technology in the 1980's during which MIDI and a number of innovative instruments were introduced, capable of generating digital output (such as the MIDI guitar). This hybrid instrument—consisting of an electric guitar outfitted with a sound-to-MIDI converter in addition to a regular pickup—was and still is regularly used by pop guitarists to drive arsenals of synthesizers (Malaita requires flute sounds to mimic the pan flutes from the Solomon Island). A novelty consisted in masking the instrument's own tuning (nearly unperceivable because of its meek unamplified sound), thus applying a two-fold transformation (sound and tuning) to the instrument's sonic identity. This actually foreshadowed a typical attitude of the denizens of the Internet[6]: Concealing one's own identity in favor of an actively constructed presentation of oneself.

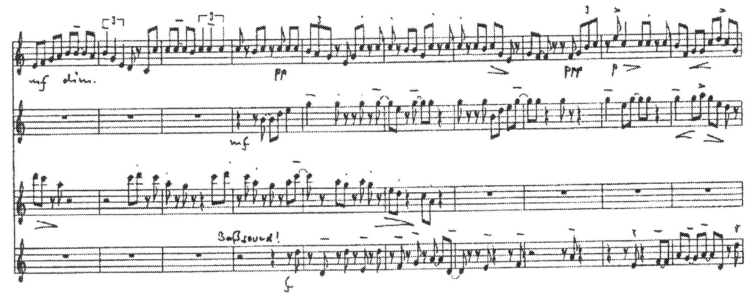

Figure 2. Measure 21-30 of Malaita by Manfred Stahnke
featuring the entrances of voices 2 and 4.

In our interview, Stahnke also makes mention of other pieces which drew their essence from other cultures: Halakiltunti (transforming music by the Tepehua people of Central America), Centonage (reflecting on a

6 We need to remember that the WWW, the Internet's most useful application was invented in the same year by Tim Berners-Lee.

music practice of South American *campesinos*) and Changguflage (based on Korean music). The title of the latter composition is remarkable as it combines the words Changgu, a Korean drum, which he contrasts with a string trio, and *camouflage*, a clear reference to cultural mimesis and the attempted amalgamation of various musical approaches (such as the scintillating octaves achieved by detuning the string instruments).

Stahnke's attitude to cultural hybridization is that of a mental traveler standing on firm European, or more precise, Northern German ground:

> *We collect, we travel either mentally, by reading books or listening to music or we travel physically. ... It makes no difference to me whether I travel in space or in time, mentally or physically.*

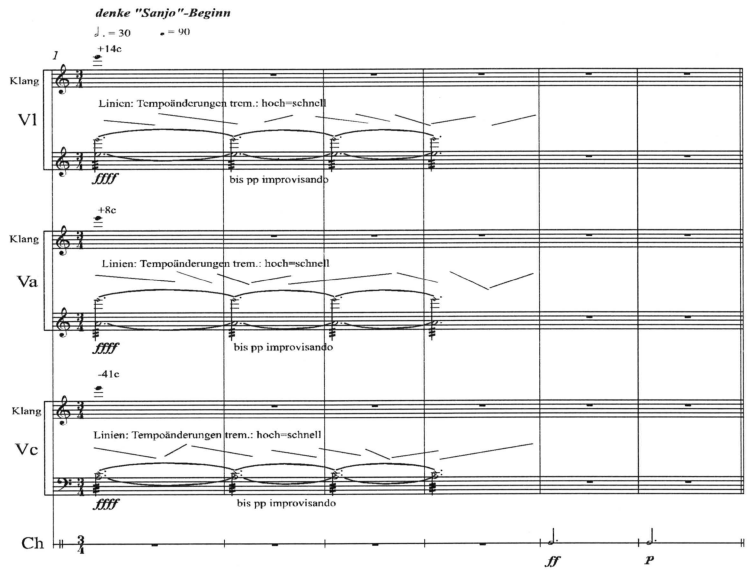

Figure 3. Measures 5-10: Scintillating unisons in Stahnke's Changguflage achieved by the scordatura and the fluctuating rate of the tremolos in the three string instruments.

Stahnke carefully evades the pitfalls of post-colonial appropriation by filtering the music through his mind of a composer/improviser. In the end, he does retain his personal style through something that could be called *resonance*, i.e. instead of applying certain stylistic elements used in order to deliberately create an ethnic-sounding surface, Stahnke's keen ear picks up on particular features such as the aforementioned scintillating octaves, transforming and amalgamating them in truly personal ways.

4. Clarence Barlow

Clarence Barlow is another case of a composer who has spent many years pondering questions of cultural identity. He was born in 1945 in Kolkata into a middle-class family with a diverse ethnic background (English, Portuguese, Burmese, Bengali). Being English-speaking, with a European cultural compass and raised as a Catholic, he certainly was an outsider in a city where less than 1% of the population are of Christian faith and started leaning towards German culture whose artifacts he embraced at the local Goethe institute until, in 1968, he was sent to Germany to study with Cologne Musikhochschule professor B.A. Zimmermann (and, from 1970-1972, with Karlheinz Stockhausen). Barlow, strongly rooted in science and mathematics, was exposed to the "German way of composing," rigidly formalized and deeply ideological. Although he was capable of rapidly adopting to German culture and language, he became an *enfant terrible* with a deep urge to expose the hypocrisies, misconceptions, self-deceptions and wrong tenets of his host culture, or any culture for that matter. Some of the titles of his works give proof of his tongue-in-cheek attitude which also draws from cognitive ambiguity and illusion: *Farting quietly in church* or the multi-lingual pun *Sprite the diner by nib writer* (which phonetically "translates" into the slightly obscene German sentence *Spreize deine Beine breiter* ("spread your legs wider"), titles which to German new music audiences who have tended

to listen to avant-garde music with quasi religious zeal would have certainly sounded offensive[7].

Barlow's work is truly multifaceted and far from being entirely understood. Esthetically, some people consider him close to John Cage, but this certainly doesn't entirely capture the scope of his work.

The other reason why Barlow is still considered somewhat controversial has to do with his main musical tool: the computer. For the longest time, people have been appalled by the idea of being entertained by something that seemingly was created by a digital machine[8].

As if it hadn't been hard enough for audiences in the West to accept that the *Werkbegriff* (concept of a work) with all the connotations of intellectual property (who owns a work and gets paid for it when a composer just puts a few dots on the page and has the performers do all the work?) had taken a blow during the 1960's, people now had to accept that the author was either dead (Roland Barthes) or replaced by a cold machine. Barlow addresses this in his orchestra piece *Orchideae Ordinariae or the 12th Root of Truth* from 1989 in which, after applying various computer-assisted processes, he finally lets the genie out of the bottle in his computer-generated piano cadenza *Pandora* (a reference to Pandora's Box which according to Greek mythology contains all the evil in the world)[9]. The construction of identity also plays a role in his piece *Çoğluotobüsişletmesi* (1978), which originally was to become a neo-romantic piano piece but turned into a computer-generated composition based entirely on a

7 He would on occasion pose as Adolf Hitler in order to provoke Germans who, in the 1980's, were still far from acknowledging their own brutal Nazi past and it was because of this attitude that he was slowly driven out of the Cologne Musikhochschule, eventually having to assume a professorship in Santa Barbara, California.

8 This effect can be tested by having people judge music first, not knowing whether it was computer-generated and then exposing them to the truth, as opposed to exposing people to the truth right away; we will observe a larger percentage of disapproval amongst members of the second group.

9 It could well be that Barlow even identifies with the computer and thus caused the rejection as this "synthetic" cultural entity that he seemingly represented. This brings to mind some of Wagner's statements on Jews in his pamphlet *Das Judenthum in der Musik*.

set of rules formalizing tonality and meter. Once again, the semantics of the title is important: while the Turkish words *otobüs işletmesi* easily translates into "bus company" (a reference to the bus ride through Anatolia where his piece was conceived) the origin of *Çoğlu* is unclear and introduces an element of ambiguity or, even better, deception, i.e. the meaning of the title just is an allusion to something familiar (at least to Turkish speakers), but it's not entirely what it's claiming to be, like an android posing to be human. An important ingredient of the construction of this piece's artificial ethnic identity is achieved by a computational approach making use of microtonality.

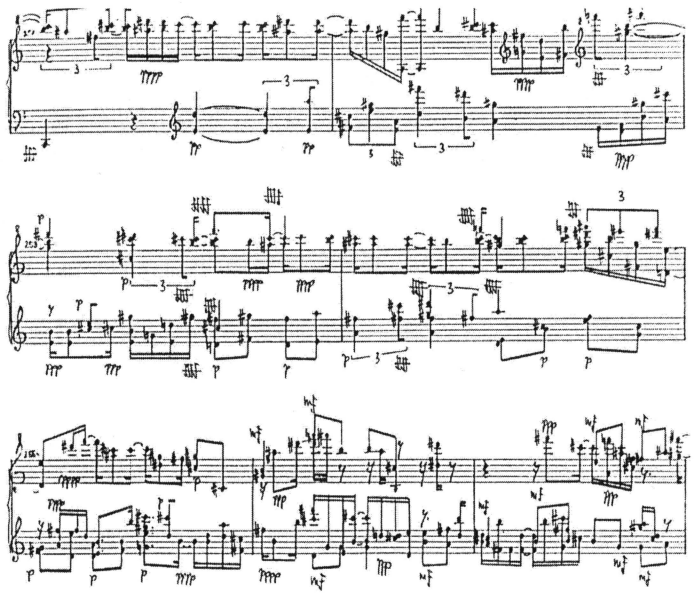

Figure 4. Excerpt from Pandora by Clarence Barlow, transcribed from a computer-generated score by pianist Kristi Becker.

Style plays an important role in Barlow's work. To him, it is not just a given which emerges automatically from a composer's play with sounds, but something that can be subject to control just like harmony or melody. Between 1986 and 2000, he worked on his generative and probabilistic music application *AUTOBUSK* controlled by 12 parameters (mathematicians will call this a 12-dimensional space) that can be manipulated to produce rhythms and melodies reminiscent of certain composers such as Pérotin or the minimalists. In *Pandora*, there is a brief moment where French horns and double basses set in; this is to signify that the generative process has yielded something that reminded Barlow of a tango. He has the orchestra therefore react with tango-like rhythms to emphasis his "find." Here, musical identity is not necessarily created as a conscious effort, but rather something that he has accidentally stumbled upon with an open and informed mind.

5. Georg Hajdu

I crossed paths with Ligeti, Barlow and Stahnke at various point in my life: Ligeti a distant musical über-vater whom I revered but was hardly capable of communicating with on an equal footing; Barlow, a sectarian and capable seducer who became my teacher and friend during my time in Cologne; and Stahnke, an idealist and magnanimous person with whom I spent a good part of my life as colleague and friend in Hamburg.

I was born to Hungarian non-religious (secular) Hungarian-Jewish parents who fled their country during the Hungarian uprising in 1956. My family is spread over several continents and I have therefore never quite gained the sense of being German or this or that. In my childhood and youth, I was strongly impressed by Bach, Beethoven and the Romantic composers (mainly Liszt) as well as Bartók, whose music my grandmother practiced when staying with us in Cologne. Later in life when the possibility of becoming a composer started crossing my mind, I turned to modernists such as Scriabin, Schönberg, Stravinsky, Berg and Messiaen, but it were Ligeti and Barlow who had the most fundamental

impact on my later development, besides, maybe, Karlheinz Stockhausen whose overarching influence could be felt all over my hometown[10]. I had the good fortune to grow up in Cologne, a city, which in the 1970's, was teaming with new music composers; and it so happens that my first composition teacher was my father's secretary in the institute of theoretical physics, who had obtained a Ph.D. in composition in her native USA. After composing a few smaller pieces and a modernist violin sonata which was even recorded and broadcast by the West German radio station (WDR), I had started in 1983 at the age of 23 to question some of the tenets of the Western avant-garde, particularly its disregard for the public and ignorance of the principles of perception and cognition. I understood that the solution didn't lie in turning the wheel back to some neo-romantic style nor in squeezing the last drop of blood out of the moribund avant-garde. In writing my piano piece *LogaRhythmen*[11] (a respelling of the German word "Logarithmen" (logarithms), referring to rhythm and logic, body and mind, soul and reason, I had discovered, on my own, the principles of postmodernism.

To me postmodernism by no means breaks away from modernism. It just adds another layer to its structures serving as a skin or façade on which to inscribe a coherent narrative. The approach is also called double-coding by the theorists of postmodernism and points at the deceptive/ illusionary nature of postmodern artifacts.

Much of my work in the 1980's follows the same idea, one of the more successful pieces being my flute piece SLEEPLESSNESS (1988/1997). This composition takes the 13 letters of its title as the basis for a labyrinthic and fractal construction, spelling out the narrative of a nocturnal panic attack to which a text on the same subject was added a few years later. It attempts to be complex on a constructive level as well as approachable from the perspective of its narrative.

10 Today I would also add John Cage whose insights into the effects of the cultural blending cannot be underestimated.

11 In 1984, I showed this piece to Ligeti who was quite complimentary.

A pivotal piece was my opera *Der Sprung – Beschreibung einer Oper* in which questions of identity have been addressed on various levels. The opera is based on a real event happening in 1984 when a philosophy student killed, with an antique gun, a professor of Jewish studies at the University of Cologne while he was teaching a seminar. This story subsequently made big waves in the German and international press, highlighting the fact that the impact of the holocaust was still felt in German society and the politicians and the populace had shied away from confronting it. The murderess turned out to be a bizarre figure, who had been suffering from a mental illness for which she couldn't be convicted. When in 1993 and 1994 the librettist Thomas Brasch (a well-known German-Jewish author and filmmaker) and I undertook the effort to capture the ramifications of this event, we came up—via computer analysis of a sentence spoken onto an answering machine—with a temporal structure, which had to be followed slavishly (signifying the inevitability of the events leading up to the murder). The 11 parts (3 "radio plays" and 8 scenes) extracted both from answering noise and the phonemes of the sentence were turned into texts and subsequently set to music. The scenes of both acts depict the protagonist from various perspectives: her professors, her neighbors, her (fictitious) diary, the weapons she had bought, her friends she bullied. Since her illness led to a very unstable sense of self—she admitted feeling remote-controlled by a computer—I decided to compose every scene in a different style: her shifting identities were to be constructed by compositional means as an added layer of story telling. The 2nd scene of the 2nd act best illustrates our topic: The investigation into the murder case had revealed that the protagonist was unhappy with the way Jewish culture was taught and represented by the non-Jewish professors. She, non-Jewish herself, badly wanting to take on a Jewish identity felt that these people were a hindrance. According to an article in an Austrian magazine she had already practiced her own kind of Judaism, which supposedly involved becoming a vegetarian (!). An attempt to get accepted into the Jewish community failed since there may have been something inauthentic about her.

I have therefore tried to capture this in this scene by composing an "inauthentic" Klezmer piece (not difficult as I have never studied this style of music) consisting of an introduction for clarinet and double bass, a song for male voice accompanied by a small ensemble and a contrasting "spectral waltz," played by amplified jazz instruments, whose harmonies were derived from the answering-machine recording. The waltz was supposed to be a reference to her assertiveness, which she had demonstrated in the Jewish-studies institute.

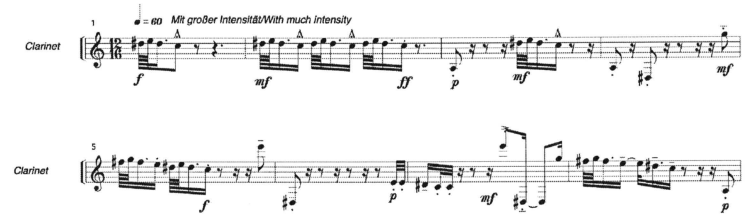

Figure 5. Excerpt from the 2nd scene of the 2nd act of the opera Der Sprung – Beschreibung einer Oper by Georg Hajdu

My opera was not the only composition of mine in which I focused on a female character. *Schwer...unheimlich schwer*, *Swan Song*, *Just Her –Jester – Gesture* are examples for pieces where gender issues are prominent, at least to some extent. Like Flaubert ("Madame Bovary c'est moi"), I feel drawn to female characters who tragically fight their destiny and defy the status quo of a male-dominated power structure.

In 2009, I was commissioned to write a piece for the Oh ton-Ensemble from the Northern German city of Oldenburg. Believing strongly in delivering "personalized" compositions I set out to find something unique about Oldenburg. I found that Ulrike Meinhof, a German left-wing militant who made headlines in the German press in 1970's and in certain ways acted like a pathetic older sibling of my opera's protagonist, was born there.

For the program notes of the piece *schwer...unheimlich* I wrote:

> *Ulrike Meinhof was certainly one of the most fascinating people in the history of West Germany. [...] In a [television] interview [...] we zoom in on the moment where the obviously deeply depressed Meinhof speaks about the role of politically active women and suggests the possibility of leaving her family. She wavers between tearfulness, on the one hand, and a provocative overemphasis, on the other. Schwer . . . unheimlich schwer is a musical portrait depicting this person's inner conflict, swinging back and forth between two sound textures, one affirmative, the other a brittle filigree. All of the musical material originates from a speech analysis of the interview and is delivered in real time to four players on their laptops. By stochastic processes it is impossible, in many parts, to predict what the musicians will play in the next moment. The uncertainty brought about by this tension [...] adds to the atmosphere of the piece and plays with the title on multiple levels.*

Swan Song, for cello and percussion (commissioned by the Shanghai Conservatory in 2011) is based on transcriptions of preexisting sonic materials: speech, music, and noises. For this piece I have chosen the final scene of a masterpiece of Chinese cinema called *Farewell, My Concubine* (*Bàwáng bié jī*), by Chen Kaige, a movie that had a great impact on me when it was released in 1993. The movie revolves around a complicated love story and features scenes from an eponymous Peking opera. Life and theater blend dramatically in the final scene. My rendering of transcribed materials by the cello and percussion, mimicking the voices and instruments of Peking opera, is accompanied by processed video from the movie, as well as electronic and prerecorded sounds. In this piece, I attempted to assimilate the Chinese cultural identity by means of digital media: the DVD of the movie as well as secondary literature available online. The use of Chinese percussion instruments and the voice-like tone of the cello gave this piece a distinct Eastern character filtered through the eyes, ears and mind of a Western composer.

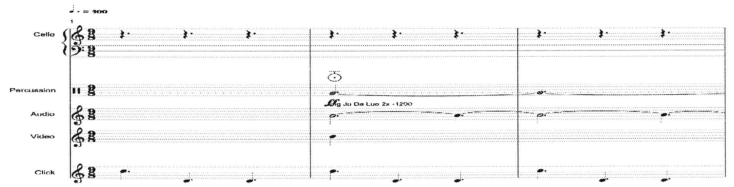

Figure 6. First three measures of Swan Song by Georg Hajdu

My piece „Blueprint" for saxophone, electric guitar, percussion, double bass and video was commissioned by the Nikel Ensemble on occasion of the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the city of Tel Aviv. The composition deals with aspects of history, urban planning, architecture and cinema in connection with one of the world's youngest metropolises, wide areas of which were constructed in pure Bauhaus style. Starting from the designs of the Scottish urban planner and botanist Sir Patrick Geddes, the number 6 and the geometric shape of the hexagon are central to this composition. The individual parts of are named after the streets intersecting with the hexagonal Dizengoff square and dedicated to Theodor Herzl, the visionary of the new state of Israel and "patron" of Tel Aviv, Sir Patrick Geddes, the early modernist urban planner, Arieh Sharon, the Israeli beekeeper and Bauhaus architect (who was so preoccupied with the hexagonal honeycomb), Ephraim Kishon, the satirists, who in his film *Blaumilch Canal* caricatured the dysfunctional city administration and the excesses of an overheated building boom, and finally the young generation of Israelis with their own utopian version of this "beautiful city [that] had been built close to the deep blue sea" (Herzl).

What's particularly relevant to our topic is that the state of Israel is a case of cultural construction in itself. Having been founded by Jewish émigrés in 1948 (therefore about the same age as the modern states of China and Germany), the entire culture had to be synthesized from scratch. Hebrew, was chosen and modernized as a language, which before the 20th

century was only used for liturgical purposes (comparable to Latin or old Greek in this respect), and its culture was amalgamated from traditions from many areas around the world where Jews had settled over millennia.

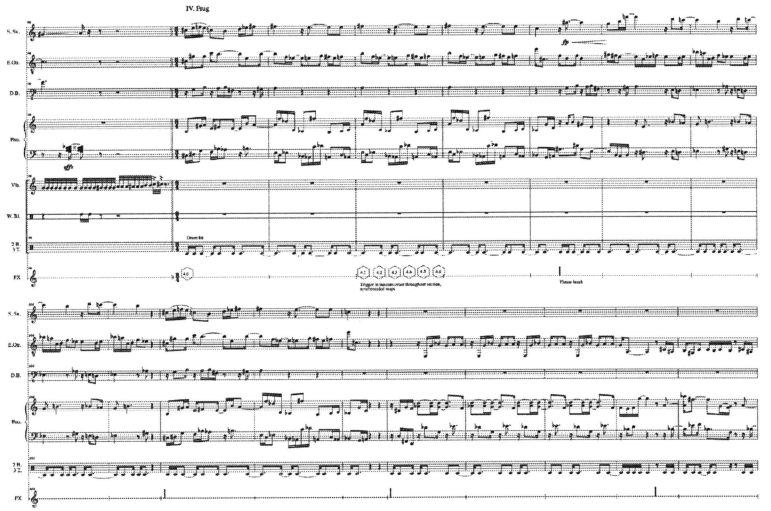

Figure 7. Excerpt from the 4th movement of Blueprint by Georg Hajdu

6. Conclusion

Summing up, we might be able to answer what these four composers have in common: It is the opening a *third space* (I'm expanding here on the notion introduced by critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha)—a third, abstract, space, global and spherical in nature (see McLuhan and B.A. Zimmermann), where the amalgamation of our culture with cultures of distant times and geographical spaces takes place; where future possibilities are being explored by deeply venturing into the territories of new scales, rhythms, harmonies and new forms of interaction; in which things

are ambiguous and deceptive; and where ambivalence can be expressed towards an opaque culture of dominance which paradoxically affords the development of this third space and at the same time exerts subtle and occasionally stifling censorship towards its artifacts. The importance of digital media in facilitating the establishment of this space should not be underestimated: As with Manfred Stahnke, cultures don't even have to be physically close in order to coalesce. All that is needed is the open mind with an antenna (or Internet access, for that sake) capable of synthesizing sounds and structures through resonance, i.e. not through a conscious effort of volition but rather through something akin the Zen art of archery.

A reader of an earlier version of this article once asked me whether this apparent cultural construction through hybridization actually leads to a new quality in which disparate elements affect each other in novel ways or just to their more or less peaceful coexistence. It would be presumptuous to give a definitive answer; history shows that the outcomes of mixing cultures can be grandiose or devastating, sometimes even both at the same time. Time will show.