

反抗的要求即是美學的要求： 試論作曲家劉韋志的政治性喧嘩

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摘 要

自第二次世界大戰結束以來，對於「反抗」的多樣性討論已經涵蓋各式領域，音樂自是不例外。隨著人類感知經驗框範的質變與不斷調整的價值觀，反抗藝術在各個歷史脈絡中自有其獨特的存在意義，臺灣古典音樂界的狀況又是如何呢？本文以臺灣具同志身分的青壯輩作曲家劉韋志（1985年生）為例，透過分析《RESISTANCE》（為古箏獨奏，2018）、《歪曲之語：眾聲喧嘩 二》（為笛〔兼蕭、埙與口弦〕、大阮與古箏，2018）、《群體盛宴：眾聲喧嘩 三》（為無伴奏混聲合唱團，2018）與《RESISTANCE III：卡珊德拉與光》（為三位擊樂家，2021）等作品，探討其作品中的反抗能量。整體而言，劉韋志受到臺灣政治情勢與世界亂象的刺激，意識型態有所翻轉，遂以表達對當代臺灣社會和政治議題之感知為藉口，挑戰音樂文化中的感官價值體系與表現等級，成為一位以否定性元素作為主要美學修辭的作曲家。由於受到瑞舞文化中電子舞曲與娛樂性用藥的影響，他的音樂不僅展現強烈的觸覺肉身性，亦在戲擬與狂歡化中有了接近「現實性」的可能，回應了反抗的要求即是美學的要求之藝術家宿命。

關鍵詞：劉韋志、反抗、眾聲喧嘩、同志作曲家、瑞舞文化

The Commitment to Resistance Is the Commitment to Art: On the Political Heteroglossia in the Works of Wei-Chih Liu

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Abstract

Since the end of World War II, discussions on the concept of “resistance” become predominant in all disciplines, including music. Amid perpetual qualitative adjustments in human perceptions and the ever-evolving values, the art of resistance exerts significance within respective historical contexts. How is the concept of “resistance” incorporated into contemporary classical music in Taiwan? This article examines the compositions of Wei-Chih Liu, a Taiwanese gay composer who came of age in the first decade of the second millennium. Through analyses on *RESISTANCE* (for solo zheng, 2018), *Twisted Words: Heteroglossia II* (for flute [doubling xiao, shun, and kou xian], da ruan, and zheng, 2018), *Revelry: Heteroglossia III* (for mixed choir a cappella, 2018), and *RESISTANCE III: Cassandra and Light* (for three percussionists, 2021), the author explores the verve of resistance embedded in his works. Susceptible to the political disorder and the chaos in the world, his ideological identification underwent a significant change. Underneath the expressions of social and political discontent, he challenged the sensual value system and the conventional aesthetic hierarchy within the musical art. His musical language features a dominant presence of negation. His exposures to electronic dance music and recreational drug use in the rave sub-culture further instill in his compositions a strong corporeal sensuality, so that he approaches “reality” by an extensive use of parodies and carnivalesques. With his unique idioms of resistance, he responds to the aesthetic calling of contemporary artists.

Keywords: Wei-Chih Liu, resistance, heteroglossia, gay composer, rave culture

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The Commitment to Resistance Is the Commitment to Art: On the Political Heteroglossia in the Works of Wei-Chih Liu

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Summary

Since the end of World War II, discussions on the concept of “resistance” become predominant in all disciplines, including music. Amid perpetual qualitative adjustments in human perceptions and the ever-evolving values, the art of resistance exerts significance within respective historical contexts. How is the concept of “resistance” integrated into the contemporary classical musical scene, which is generally considered highbrow, implicit, and even equivocal? Can classical music manifest the spirit of “resistance”? In fact, as Taiwan is more of a follower instead of precursor in the development of classical music, there are but limited works which fixate on the idea of resistance. Nonetheless, with the lift of Martial Law in Taiwan in 1987, what used to be tabooed issues were openly discussed and histories rewritten. The art and music circles started to dwell on the “alienated social milieu,” and along with it the idea of resistance, which had long been suppressed, began to emerge due to an arising sense of defiance. Take the February 28 Incident as an example. Composers from the previous generation, including Tyzen Hsiao (1938-2015), Fan-Long Ko (born 1947), Tsung-Hsien Yang (born 1952) and Gordon Shi-Wen Chin (born 1957) all revisited this critical historic event with original musical compositions. These works juxtapose the aesthetics of negation and affirmation, while at the same time unfold the prospect for the future. Among the younger generation of composers, traditional “grand narratives” no longer appeal to them as a fertile ground to generate creative works and concept of resistance subsides from

musical compositions. Born in 1985, Wei-Chih Liu, the contemporary Taiwanese gay composer, is a rare exception. Through analyses on *RESISTANCE* (for solo zheng, 2018), *Twisted Words: Heteroglossia II* (for flute [doubling xiao, shun, and kou xian], da ruan, and zheng, 2018), *Revelry: Heteroglossia III* (for mixed choir a cappella, 2018), and *RESISTANCE III: Cassandra and Light* (for three percussionists, 2021), the author explores the verve of resistance embedded in his works.

First, the author contextualizes the works of Wei-Chih Liu from his life experiences, especially his immersion in the rave sub-culture, which planted the seeds of resistance during his undergraduate years. For him, the neo tribes evoke a sense of camaraderie, the boundary-crossing communion, and the personal experiences of gay identification. Liu has inadvertently appropriated elements of rave and electronic dance music as nutrients for his composition and grafted them upon the hard style of Techno. *Twisted Words: Heteroglossia II* and *Revelry: Heteroglossia III* are two of the few examples among serious musical works where the idea of resistance in sub-cultures functions as the main thematic concern. Nonetheless, it takes longer for the idea of resistance to mature full-fledgedly so that concrete representations can be incorporated in his later works. Like many of his predecessors in the cultural circle in Taiwan, their works can only take on more momentum when they are linked to controversial political ideology, such as the referendum on gay marriage or the potential Chinese invasion of Taiwan. *RESISTANCE* and *RESISTANCE III: Cassandra and Light* unravel a self-evident sense of opposition.

Second, the author analyses *RESISTANCE* and *Twisted Words: Heteroglossia II*, especially the extensive use of condensed, compressed, and screeching sounds, as well as their effects achieved by acoustic and tactile synesthesia. In fact, with the different degrees of coarseness and the fast-changing uneven density shuffling through different chromatic ranges, the listeners can experience the holistic sensation of the sudden contraction of the muscles and nerves as if being electrified. The heightened sensation triggers and strengthens the tactile mechanism of the body. The mechanism which prompts the reaction of the flesh through sound wave can be

compared to that of Cubist aesthetics, which distorts the shapes of the objects depicted and uses heterogeneous media to increase the dimensions of time and space in paintings and art works, and ultimately achieves an elevated tactile and motor sensation. If the aesthetic experience of cubist art is characterized as “tactile space,” then that of the music of Wei-Chih Liu “tactile time.” The tactile sensation here involves corporeality, which renders the resistance, endurance, opposition, repel or resistor an even more definite palpability. It is undeniable that music is considered as lacking in physicality, still proper arrangement can maximize the effects of alternations between the gripping force and release. *RESISTANCE* and *Twisted Words: Heteroglossia II* perfectly demonstrate how a concept can be fully realized with intended effects in musical works. Of course, the composer himself is not the only spokesperson of his compositions; the vehement rendition of the performers and the feedback reciprocated by the audience contribute to the realization of mutual corporeality and subjectivity.

Lastly, the author examines the vocal work, *Revelry: Heteroglossia III* and *RESISTANCE III: Cassandra and Light* from the perspective of parody. In *Revelry: Heteroglossia III*, Liu uses pure vocal voice as an instrument to suggest the scenes of sexuality and the ecstasy of the body, and thus expresses the transgression and jouissance of resistance; and by doing so, the work echoes the theories of heteroglossia and carnivalization proposed by the Russian literary critic, Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975). For *RESISTANCE III: Cassandra and Light*, the composer turns to the social and political chaos. Given that the rumpus generated by percussion instruments remains abstract, the selected array of soundscapes of Taiwan society and temple festivals introduces the quality of worldliness, which is deeply rooted in the down-to-earth gravity. With the burlesques and parodies ingrained in the carnival ambience, the music becomes a gesture of cultural resistance and formulates an interpretation on the history of Taiwan. On the one hand, the composer insists on expressing his political and social beliefs, and on the other he undertakes the aesthetic mission in exploring different possibilities of “sound.” The tension entangled in-between the political concern and the artistic expression is a challenge for all artists who want to be vocal about social issues.

Stimulated by the political situation and the global maelstrom, Wei-Chih Liu dismantles his previous ideological identifications. With the pretext of expressing the social and political issues in Taiwan, he challenges the sensational system and performance in the musical culture and transforms into a composer whose musical rhetoric centers around a dominant presence of negation. To a great extent, his personal style can best be characterized as an aesthetics of violence. His exposures to electronic dance music and the use of recreational drug in the rave sub-culture further instill in his compositions a strong corporeal sensuality, so that he approaches “reality” by way of an extensive use of the parodies and carnivalesques. Even though he cannot single-handedly release the revolutionary potency in the Taiwanese society through the art of music, at least he brings attention to issues of self-identification, political consciousness, and a sharpened awareness of the world, which together define his action to resist. Through the practice in his personal life and work, he responds to the calling of the artists, “the commitment to resistance is the commitment to art.” More importantly, his unique idioms of resistance become the badge of his artistic expression and its value can be singled out and identified within the larger context of cultural and historical framework.

Keywords: Wei-Chih Liu, resistance, heteroglossia, gay composer, rave culture

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