

Music History and Cosmopolitanism / abstract & bio
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Street Performance as Catalyst and Indicator of Cosmopolitanism

This paper examines the contribution of street performances in Hong Kong to the process and our understanding of cosmopolitanism. Hong Kong is a multi-ethnic city where traditional Chinese culture and Western culture collides. In 2010, the victory of Andrew So's court case led to a bloom of street performances until 2014, when the government restricted the pedestrian zone usage and street performers subsequently adopt new strategies. During the umbrella movement, a civil disobedience protest of blocking traffic in 2014, street performance also functions to express political thoughts. Within the course of five years, the public conception of this urban culture dramatically changes from the labeling of low social rank to the positive symbol of cultural diversity. In fact, the culture of street performances demonstrates several cosmopolitan qualities, including the diversity and mobility of performers, the ability to engage different social classes, the emergence of cosmopolitan class performers, and most importantly, the quick response to changing environment. These qualities contribute to a form of public pedagogy, which citizens of different backgrounds are educated about new sound and new ideas in a complex and interactive way.

While contemporary research focuses on the relation of street performances to public space-time and regulations (Simpson, 2011), technology and construction of urban soundscape (Bennett & Rogers, 2014), few scholars point out its linkage to cosmopolitanism. Drawing from fieldwork and documentaries about street performances, I first provide a case-study on the bloom and development of street performances in Hong Kong since 2010. Then, I compare with related scholarly writings to reveal the mechanism behind the suggested connections between street performance and cosmopolitanism. I argue that street performance, being vibrant and highly-adaptive, facilitates the transmission and internalization of "foreign" culture, and hence boosts the process of cosmopolitanism.

Chan Ko-On is currently studying his Master in the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He is working on his thesis about the psychological realism and multiple stylistic influences in Tchaikovsky's *Manfred Symphony*. He has written topics about 19th century nationalism, colonialism in film music, unofficial Soviet music and the influence of Japanese ACG culture on Hong Kong teenagers' perception of homosexuality and feminism. He received the Chung Chi College Class Scholarship and Departmental Prize for excellent academic performance in 2014.