

**Tokyo Wonder Site** is an interdisciplinary research centre for international artists in all media in Tokyo. I participated in a seven-week research-in-residence programme, which offers creators opportunities for study related to art and cultural activity in Tokyo.

My programme consisted of:

1. Meeting with Japanese composers Joji Yuasa and Toshi Ichianagi, and a conference with Miyuki Akimoto, Yu Kuwabara and a Finnish resident composer Juha Koskinen
2. Research sessions with *noh*-theatre master Norikazu Komparu and *koto* virtuoso Nobutaka Yoshizawa, in which we discussed the background philosophy of their performances. These sessions related to my ongoing investigation of ‘*ma*,’ the Japanese aesthetics of space and time.

Further discussions included:

- sessions regarding tablature, which is traditionally used for Japanese music performance. Specific areas of discussion included what kinds of information are indicated, and what remains hidden
- the aesthetics of ‘united breathing’ in ensemble performance undertaken without score and conductor and how this concept relates to musical structure
- aesthetics of performance practice: significance of hiding individuality, and perfect imitation of master’s physical movements/phrasing without adding own interpretation
- importance of 化け物 (which can be translated as ‘transformed forms of life’) in Japanese traditional folktales and traditional arts

The idea of the form for 髪*variations* for solo alto saxophone, which transforms the composer’s lan-

guage (understood as fully-notated) into the performer’s (fully-improvised) language arose from a week-long collaborative research session with saxophonist Timothy O’Dwyer, whose work I was familiar with from his involvement in the ELISION ensemble. My considerations in this work were how the piece can encompass the performer’s musical identity; and how the performer can be ‘openly receptive to the flux of the moment’ in a continuous time-flow. Over the course of our week-long session, O’Dwyer and I created six variations on my fully-notated piece 髪 for solo alto saxophone. At the end of the week, he gave two performances of 髪*variations* in the concert series *hyb N’2* organised by *hyb.project* at *café olimpico* in Tokyo.

At the June 26 ‘open studio’, all resident artists presented the results of their on-site research. I presented a video of the performance and discussed the process of collaborative research.

### Summary

I greatly enjoyed my stay at **Tokyo Wonder Site** where I was fortunate to encounter internationally-active artists: visual artists, performance artists, sound artists, curators and composers from Spain, France, Finland, Lebanon, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar, Australia, USA and Japan. I was able to exchange ideas daily with creators in other artistic mediums. This led me to focus on aspects of music performance with which I had been unfamiliar. I especially enjoyed discussion about the meaning of spaces between the human body and

surrounding materials with Japanese resident artist Yuko Kamei, and this led me, in my solo saxophone piece, to use music stands and scores as visible symbols of distance between composer and performer: the in-time process of their removal corresponds to the degree of notational indication.

For me, the significance of being involved in such a creator-in-residence program can be found in the encounter and exploration of challenging new ways of approaching artistic production which is made possible through extensively equipped facilities and a very rich artistic atmosphere.

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