

The 11th International, Invention, Innovation & Design 2022

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Ushering in the Age of Endemic

THE 11TH INTERNATIONAL INNOVATION, INVENTION & DESIGN COMPETITION INDES 2022

EXTENDED ABSTRACTS BOOK



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MERDU PUISI THE MALAY ART SONG ALBUM

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ABSTRACT

This project is a recording of songs in the Art Song genre. Art Song is a composition for voice accompanied by piano and in the style of classical music. First introduced in the 17th century and has been sung in various languages such as in German known as lieder and in French known as Chasons. The use of poetry as a text is very synonymous with the composition of Art Song. In Malaysia, the Art Song genre is still not widely used; therefore, this album, can introduce the Art Song genre to the Malaysian community and increase interest in poetry writing. For this album, a total of 7 Art Song compositions will be recorded. Among the composers involved are Tazul Tajuddin, Alia Farahin and Amanina Alwani. This song with Malay poetry text will be sung by Soprano Khairunnisa Diyana Md Noor with piano accompaniment by Bernard Tan. The songs were chosen to have an image of life and the environment in Malaysia.

Keywords: Malay art songs, poem

1. INTRODUCTION

Art Song is one of the styles of composition from around 1820 to 1900. Composers like Schubert, Schumann and Poulenc were some of the pioneers in Art Songs. What are Art Songs compared to other songs? Art song is a unique hybrid of poetry and music fashioned of two arts that were considered "sister arts" (Kimball, 2013). The beauty of art songs is in the combination of singing and piano. Both elements play an important role and not to be strong by themselves; complementing each other will make the performance be remembered. The poem is another distinctive element that makes the art songs in their own style. Text from poets Heinrich Heine, Wilhelm Müller and Wolfgang von Goethe was one of the poets that was used in the art songs composition (Kimball, 2006). Singers around the world perform art songs in their recitals and voice teachers use this to teach singers (Proehoeman, 2013). Art songs from German, French, Italy, English and Indonesian language were performed and composed (Zamani & Abd Gani, 2020).

Furthermore, it is anticipated that this album would foster greater enthusiasm among the Malaysian populace for classical music, particularly the piano and soprano genres, which have historically been marginalized. Additionally, it has the potential to challenge societal stereotypes that associate classical music exclusively with specific social categories. Cultural background can also play a role, as certain types of music may be more prevalent in certain regions or among certain groups of people. Shah (2000) also mentions this: in general, data from the subgroups indicates that subjects within each ethnic group were more inclined to select



music of their own culture than the music of other cultures. Except for the Chinese subgroup, both Malay and Indian subjects tended to prefer their own art music over any other art musical styles.

The incorporation of Malay language in the poem is intended to foster a stronger sense of connection and comprehension among the Malaysian populace. Therefore, the act of composing poetry can be further elaborated upon. This album is anticipated to foster artistic expression by providing a platform for emerging genres within the music business, while employing a methodology that resonates more deeply with Malaysians, namely the utilization of the Malay language. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this album will also be presented to the international market due to the genre's heightened popularity in that context. However, the incorporation of the Malay language will contribute a sense of variety and diversity, thereby captivating the interest of the global population.

2. METHODOLOGY

To help in finding an appropriate design, research has been conducted through observations, interviews and recording sessions to identify and gather some information. By doing so, important data and information gained would aid in the research process efficiently. In this study, two distinct methodologies will be employed. The first is the interview session, and the second is recording sessions with the application of artistic research. A comprehensive interview session will be conducted with the composers to obtain an in-depth understanding of their experiences during the process of composing the songs. The questions will encompass the concepts, theme, and compositional technique of the subject matter. Another session will be the recording of the art songs to compile them into the album. The recording process has a few stages that will be a rehearsal with a pianist, recording audio (voice and piano), mixing and mastering. While Leavy (2009) feels that some research practices cannot be captured in written text, such as performance and music-based methods, performance as a methodology is used in this research by the capturing of rehearsals, studio recordings and live performances with a digital recorder and professional recording equipment (both in the recording studio and onsite), which were then used as data for reflection and analysis.

3. FINDINGS

This project consists of seven Malay Art Songs. Some of the composers in Malaysia who actively compose this album are Tazul Izan Tajuddin, Marzelan Salleh, Yusran Yusoff, Alwagera and Alia Farahin. Western composing techniques are included in the composers' art songs. While some composers demonstrate the complexity and are quite difficult to sing and play on the piano, there are also composers who produce simple, beautiful melodies to represent the scenes of the songs they wish to capture (Abd Wahab & Md Noor, 2022). The composer created the melody based on the lyrics of the famous poem by Zaaba, Usman Awang and many other poets. Their compositions demonstrate the incorporation of Malay traditional elements. Composers included Malay ornamentation in their compositions. Several composers translate



Malay traditional genres such as *makyong*, *wayang kulit*, *menora*, and *gamelan* into their art songs. Certain songs are quite difficult to sing due to the fusion of the Western composition approach and Malay traditional style, and singers must comprehend the repertoire in terms of lyrics, musical features, and singing styles in order to perform effectively. Thus, this study serves a purpose in the understanding of the Malay traditional genre's adaptation to art songs.

4. CONCLUSION

With the existence of this album in the Malaysian music industry, it is hoped to support the development and creation of new works through compositions in the Art Song genre. A genre that is rarely highlighted but needs to be expanded because it has high artistic value to contribute to wide exposure to Malaysian society. This album can introduce classical music in the Art Song genre to produce new ideas in the music industry and allow society to accept this classical music more easily like in other developed countries. With this, the diversity of music types can be seen in the Malaysian music industry market and can increase the understanding and appreciation of music among the community. The contribution of the country's economy can be seen by bringing this music to the international market because this music is more popular and has become known in the international market. This album is also expected to attract the interest of listeners outside Malaysia and highlight the beauty of the Malay language in the poetry found in the lyrics of this composition.

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