Unit 6: Exotism in late nineteenth century France & Unit 7:

The exposition universelle of 1889

* Paris
* World’s fair
  + Public exhibition
* May 6-november 6,1889
* Eiffel Towel
* Over 30 million visitors
* Displays of culture
  + Crafts and industries from around the world
* The *kampong javanaise*
  + Recreation of Sundanese village

Gamelan

* Type of Indonesian orchestra
* Ceremonial/religious occasions
* Common instruments:
  + Gongs, gong-chime, metallophones, drums, stringed instruments, xylophones, vocalists
* Uses non-European scale system (7 notes, major and minor scales)
* Many layers of musical “texture”

Claude Debussy

* 1862-1918
* French
* Music “evokes a mood, feeling, atmosphere, or scene”
* Didn’t obey traditional musical rules—unresolved (the forward motion that needs a end)
* “there is no theory/ you merely have to listen pleasure is the law”
* Often used exotic scales
* Inspired by non-European music

Estampes

* Piano piece by Debussy
* 1903
* Means engravings or prints
  + 1. Pagodes (Temples)
    - Imitates gamelan scales
    - Multilayered texture
    - Pentatonic

Transcultural composing or pure exoticism.

* *Pagodes* contains elements from European art music and element from gamelan
* But Debussy not “Othering”
* In carmen, the music is only talk about her but in…

Recapping unit6

* Exoticism
  + The use of non-Western elements in Western music.
* Othering
  + Labeling group/place as different from one’s own
  + Bizet’s Carmen
    - Carmen=Roma
    - Music=Spanish
* Transcultural composing
  + Hybrid of Western and non-Western styles
  + Not intended to other
  + Debussy’s Pagodes from Estampes

Unit 7

Setting the stage

* 20th centuries
* North …Boli

Colin McPhee in Bali

* 1900-1964
* Canadian
* Lived in Bali for 8 years (1931-1938)
* Ethnomusicology study
  + Ethnomusicology=study of non-Western music
* Wrote Music in Bali
  + Study of Balinese music
* Made transcriptions of Balinese gamelan music
  + Transcription=arrangement of a piece of music for a different instrument
  + Not 100% percentage translation between notes of the scales
* *Balinese Ceremonial Music*
  + Transcription for two pianos
  + Traditional Balinese music (the music it not composed by him)

Tabuh-tabuhan (original music composed by Colin)

* Colin McPhee
* 1936
* Premiered in Mexico City
* Toccata for two pianos and orchestra
* Movement 1: Ostinatos (a melody repeats and repeats again)
  + Elements from gamelan style
    - Layers of rhythmic structure
    - Extended percussion section
    - Imitates gamelan scales(pentatonic)
    - Melodies taken from traditional music
  + Transcultural composing (not about characters or other people, just abstract personal inner feelings for various of music forms, writing a piece of different music that fusing variety style of music after years of experiencing and learning)

Benjamin Britten: deep religious, deep confliction about his own identity, shame?

* 1913-1976 (others were composing complicated works)
* English
* Widely accessible music
* Known for his operas
* Homosexuality
  + Peter pears
  + Tenor (singer) / Britten’s life partner
* Several operas deal with themes related to homosexuals in society
  + Usually implicit- not public recognition
* Homosexuality in mid-20th century
  + Considered a crime in many places.
    - Illegal in England until 1967
  + Scientists/ psychologists viewed as a mental disorder
    - Hidden relationships

Bali: Sexual Paradise

* More acceptance of openly homosexual relationships
* Seen by many as place for sexual freedom
* Colin McPhee, also a gay man( with a wife, later divorced), was able to live openly with a Bali man.

McPhee and Britten

* Britten and Pears in New York, 1939-1942
  + Not only because of…but also the identity as…
* Met Colin McPhee (Britten first impression of Bali and first exposure to Gamelan music is colored by Colin’s unique descriptions, transcriptions, and experience as a symbol of free sexuality)
  + Performed/recorded Balinese Ceremonial Music

Issues of Sexuality in Benjamin Britten’s Operas

* 15 operas/Several deal with themes related to homosexuality.
* Isolated individuals, hostile societies
* *Peter Grimes*
* 1945
* Peter Pears as Peter Grimes.
* Peter grimes as an outsider, (the society gave him identity as a criminal and he accepted it)
  + Prosecuted by his own society
* Grimes accepts his own shame/guilt

Death in Venice

* Benjamin Britten
* Premiered 1974
* Aldeburgh Festival in England
* Based on Thomas Mann novella Der Tod in Venedig
* Plot deals with pederasty attraction
* A relationship of a sexual nature between an adult man and an adolescent boy.
* Plot: Aging German novelist
  + Travels to Venice
  + Falls in love with Tadzio Young Polish boy
  + Cholera outbreak in the city
  + Aschenbach ignores the warnings, dies. Killed by his thoughts.
* Role of Tadzio danced, not sung
  + Accompanied by gamelan-inspired music.
* Inspired by gamelan music
  + Exotic music emphasizes Tadzio’s remoteness
  + Connection drawn for Britten between the exotic and the homoerotic
* The gamelan sound represents Aschenbach’s fantasies, desire
  + ‘Metaphorical exoticism’

The spectrum of Exoticism

* Exoticism = use of non-European elements in European music
* Pure Exoticism
  + Represents an exotic subject(person, place, group, etc.)
  + Often “othering”
* Transcultural composing
  + Non-European elements not used for “othering”
  + Hybrid of styles
* Questions
  + Does this work contain non-Western elements?
  + Are these elements used to define or describe an exotic(non-Western) subject?
    - How to define the subject: people, place rather than a concept
  + If not, what’s their purpose?
    - Regarding Death in Venice, Britten’s use of gamelan styles does not represent a non-western music, but Britten’s use of gamelan styles helps to represent something “other” within the character of Aschenbach

Connecting the dots

* Exoticism can be seen as a spectrum
  + Pure exoticism to Transcultural composing
* Bizet’s Carmen is pure exoticism
* Debussy’s Pagodes and McPhee’s Tanuh-tabuhan are Transcultural composing
* Britten’s Death in Venice is more complicated
  + Use of non-Western elements but not to describe exotic subjects could point to Transcultural composing
  + But the use of these elements to represent a character’s ‘non-normal; fantasies could point to Pure Exoticism.
  + Which is it?