



Rethinking Cultural Study of Music Through Contemporary Music Activities in Indonesia Present Day

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Abstract. For at least the last six years (since 2016), several music activists in Yogyakarta who are members of the Art Music Today Foundation, have held an annual agenda entitled October Meeting Contemporary Music and Musicians. This agenda, although performing the works of composers like a festival, is more inclined as a creative laboratory and cultural interaction, where the participants—who come from various regions in Indonesia—always exchange relevant contextual ideas. The music compositions which are performed on the agenda, are only temporary activities, but the composers' ideas, the social challenges they face, and how they treat their respective cultures and interact with them in the midst of global association, become a long-term task, and it is very interesting and dynamic to observe. Multiculturalism is also a key word that can be read from the works of these composers, which are full of local-traditional elements. This local-global interaction, supported by all the conveniences in network formation and actualization, is another point that is equally significant. This article asks, how does cultural study of music have a function to look at the dynamics of contemporary music in Indonesia? And why has this discipline received so little attention, compared to, for example, ethnomusicology or applied ethnomusicology? Tia DeNora's views in *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology* used as the basic concept for this research, supported by re-study on a book, *Cultural Study of Music* (edited by Clayton, etc.), as well as Stuart Hall's, Grossberg's, and Kortesoja's views about the concept of articulation that discusses how ideas from various social formations interlock to find meaning. This research produces a map reading the concept of study and practices, and is expected to have a contribution to reviewing the importance of the discipline of cultural study of music, especially for studying contemporary music activities in Indonesia which are very plural and interesting.

Keywords: cultural study of music, contemporary music, creativity, articulation, music sociology, multiculturalism

1 Introduction

Specific studies that link music and culture critically in an academic context have begun since Joseph Kerman (1985) wrote the book *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology*. He expressed views based on the concept of “critical musicology”, or “new musicology”. The focus of critical musicology renews the discipline of musicology that developed at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, at that time musicological research generally only focused on history, theory and aesthetics. Critical musicology (new musicology) also renews the tradition of music criticism carried out by Eduard Hanslick, Robert Schumann, and others. Critical musicology is starting to see more open possibilities, namely involving interdisciplinary studies to read musical events, including the role of cultural studies. In previous decades, disciplines that study the relationship between culture and music can indeed be seen, among others, through the works of Alan P. Meriam, *Anthropology of Music* (1964), Jaap Kunst, *Comparative Musicology (Before 1950)*, Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music* (1949). Adorno’s view has a special characteristic, namely that it involves philosophy as the main point of view, although he also pays special attention to mass culture.

Understanding music and culture in the context of the cultural study of music has broader characteristics than critical musicology or ethnomusicology. Middleton (2003: 10) believes that music that is separated from culture is illegitimate. The culture in question is closely related to the topics (scope) that are generally discussed in cultural studies. He also said that modern music studies are a dynamic that continues to renew/critically look back at previous studies through new paradigms:

What was new in the late twentieth century, however, was precisely the concept of culture, in a specific sense associated with the post-Enlightenment world. We will return to the ramifications of this concept; for now, it is enough to note the political thrust of its usages in late modernity, which, within musical studies, has generated a whole range of characteristic impulses: attacks on “the canon,” on “great composer history,” and on “transcendental” aesthetics; critiques of “positivistic” historiographies and analytical methods; deconstructions of patriarchal, ethnocentric and other “ideological” interpretations; valorization of popular music cultures; the relativizing of differences between musical systems; and so on. On this level, the new approaches all stand for the proposition that culture matters, and that therefore any attempts to study music without situating it culturally are illegitimate (and probably self-interested).

Culture in the context of the cultural study of music, thus, can be viewed more broadly, not merely factually, for example talking about music in the context of certain cultural traditions (anthropology, ethnomusicology). Discussions about politics, identity, gender and ideology eventually became commonplace in the cultural study of music, although they have a certain flexibility when compared to the main roots of cultural studies, for example it is rare to find topics that talk about race or discrimination. Culture and criticism then become the two main loci or substances of the cultural study of music. Middleton’s following statement is interesting to observe:

(.....) *that an introduction to the cultural study of music should be critical—and a useful starting point is the awareness that the concepts of both “culture” and “critique,” in their recognizable modern meanings, emerged concurrently in the moment of the European Enlightenment (Middleton, 2003: 10).*

Music in a variety of genres, of course, it has a close connection with the social context. Cultural study of music attempts to view music not in a material aesthetic context, although aesthetics can also be seen as an “ideological product”, even aesthetic production can also be influenced by political-economic factors. Contemporary music, which is discussed in this article, has various possible intersections, both music in an aesthetic context (as an ideological product and political-economic representation), as well as in a social context—where the production of composers' creative ideas is also related to sociological struggles. At its simplest, the composer captures the social situation around him and then develops it into a compositional idea.

To be honest, in Indonesia there is no known tradition called “contemporary music”. Contemporary music comes from the West (Europe, then America) as a response to the great traditions that came before: renaissance, baroque, classical, romantic and modern music. Contemporary music can also be said to be the music of the 20th century (see Leeuw, 1980), at which time there was a massive emancipation of musical material that could be read autonomously. The main characteristic of the aesthetic building of contemporary music is no longer seeing music in a large structure, but rather how each element in music is explored as widely as possible. Composers can focus specifically—for example on timbre alone, or texture alone. Apart from that, probability (music and probability), as promoted by John Cage in the 1950s, it is also a sign that contemporary music has significant differences from other music genres at that time. Contemporary music also opens up the possibility of exploring materials (not only musical materials) to be used as composition material. Everyday tools can also be used to make music (for example see *Water Walk*, John Cage, 1959). Figures from past Indonesian composers who can be placed in the contemporary music scene include: Slamet A. Sjukur, Harry Roesli, Sapto Raharjo. Mack (2001) has written quite carefully about the links between contemporary music and intercultural issues. He specifically explained that “contemporary music” in Indonesia has its own problems, as well as contemporary music in the West, which also has its own problems related to their respective historical roots.

Mack's argument is interesting to see in the context of contemporary musical struggles at that time (especially in the 1990s to 2000s), but in the present, or 20 years later, major changes have occurred. Every composer today no longer cares much about terminological discourse (what is contemporary music?) Apart from the ease of networking which is increasingly open nowadays, the competitiveness of contemporary music lies more in collaborative aspects and broad cultural interactions. One example is through the 1Beat (One Beat) program which is held every year in America. Composers from Indonesia have participated regularly in the last five years. This cultural interaction is also seen as an interesting fact. In the last ten years too, many composers from Indonesia undertake residencies in other countries to exchange ideas, creative ideas, and then perform their works. This includes various

contemporary music festivals held in Indonesia. This phenomenon is a social fact that can be seen through the lens of music sociology. Tia DeNora is a figure who comprehensively examines the integration of musical events and social facts. In his work, *After Adorno: Rethinking Music Sociology* (2003), DeNora carefully outlines Adorno's views (as well as providing opinions/criticisms) and then links their relevance to the subsequent context. Explained by William G. Roy (2003):

DeNora's main criticism of Adorno is that he never concerned himself with the small-scale social practices of music, but instead focused on the macrocultural structures and power relations that organize music production and consumption. In contrast, DeNora examines how music organizes social processes and how social relations define and problematize musical activities. How people relate to the presence of music helps define what the social relationship is. On the other hand, music (ie, performances, compositions, and recordings) is created, revised, and problematized by the social relations and contexts of musical activities. Thus composition, performance, listening, criticism, and various other modes of participation in music are all equally social and require attention.

It appears that DeNora pays attention to a wide range of musical events, not just certain dominant ones, for example music from the works of great composers such as Arnold Schoenberg and Richard Wagner. On the other hand, DeNora's view provides interesting information that music is a broad practice, therefore studies of it also allow it to be explored more openly. Contemporary music, in this case, is more inclined towards vernacular practices. It can grow everywhere, and is not tied to a single distribution system currently controlled by publishers in the digital world. Contemporary music provides a place, opportunity and idea of openness, anywhere and in any situation (not bound by trends). The possibilities will be different, when we think about it, there is also pop, jazz, rock, indie rock, and so on. These genres live in a system dominated by power (commercialization) driven by global agents, and it is very systematic, dependent on digital publications, has ratings measures, and other economic targets. While contemporary music grows in relatively strange layers, few masses, but always there to convey unique ideas - very different from the musical genres previously mentioned.

Toynbee, in *music, culture, and creativity* (2003) outlines an interesting view. He saw that the works of emerging composers were greatly influenced by educational background, class and gender. He also quotes Bourdieu's views on social class, and Baba's views on "habitus":

(...) from the other direction as it were, aspiring musical creators are disposed to aim for a particular position in the field according to "habitus," the way of going on in the world that every actor "carries" with her. It is largely acquired during the early years, and is determined by a complex of social factors such as class, education, and gender. Critically, the push of musician habitus and the pull of the field tend to converge, and it is through the highly charged near alignment of these forces that a "space of possibilities" (Bourdieu 1993b, 176-77, 182-85) then opens up. What Bourdieu calls possible are nothing less than creative choices in the terms I am using here. They are made much more frequently when the field begins to shift, or when new kinds of authors begin to push forward. In these circumstances the space of

possibilities expands, , and creative possibilities further out along the “radius of creativity” become audible (Toynbee 2000, 35-42).

1.1 Current Situation

It is very interesting to discuss the growth of contemporary music in Indonesia, a country which incidentally has a rich and very diverse musical tradition, where this musical tradition can be used as a source of ideas for creating musical compositions. Recently, the Government through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology has also been intensively supporting programs related to the development of contemporary music in Indonesia. Examples of the programs they supported include: Kata Bunyi Forum (held in Solo, November 2023), Indonesia Bertutur (held in Ambon, November 2023), and Lokovasia – Lokakarya Konservasi dan Inovasi Musik Tradisi Indonesia (held in Bali, October 2023).

These three programs have the same substance, namely including “artistic incubation” as a part of their activities, before the participants involved perform their works. Artistic incubation—where the activity is practically a kind of quarantine to carry out the creative process together—is one of the parameters in contemporary musical activity which is full of the struggle for ideas to read phenomena around them which are then transformed into musical compositions. In popular music (read: entertainment industry), the term artistic incubation tends not to be known, because popular music has different process characteristics and orientations. However, it cannot be denied that in popular music activities there are also processes that appear similar to incubation, although at different levels. Setiyono (2023)¹, as one of the organizers of the Kata Bunyi Forum, said that this forum tries to read the latest potential of young talents in various regions in Indonesia. “We brought them together in one room to interact with each other to create musical compositions together. There are those with a background in traditional music, band players, keroncong, and so on. This is an incubation space for mutual learning. This meeting of artists/musicians/composers from various backgrounds makes the struggle for ideas even more interesting,” he said.

In short, it can be said that the development of contemporary music currently occurring in Indonesia is characterized by at least three things: First, the increasing number of open creative spaces, where composers, especially young ones, can use it as a space for their existence to develop. Second, collectivity, collaboration, ease of networking. These three aspects are assumed to be very dominant and have become the main characteristics of recent developments in contemporary music. Collectivity is an important marker where the existence of composers is greatly influenced by the existence of other “fellow composers”. Collectivity is a kind of network of friendship and cooperation. Generally, they exchange experiences, knowledge, ideas and information that can be used to support the existence of composers. This is different from the situation ten years ago where communication and information technology was not as easy as it is today. Collaboration is an aspect of praxis that every composer hopes to develop in order to develop their interactive abilities. Basically, although compos-

ers often work alone and then have their work played by musicians, they need collaborative activities especially to gain new technical experience. The ease of networking can be exemplified by the data that recently many Indonesian composers have done residency outside Indonesia very easily. This fact is different from 10-20 years ago, where going outside Indonesia was still a luxury/rare opportunity. The social network that these composers have, therefore, is not only a local-national network, but also an international one; Third, access to studies. Through technological developments, access to studies has also become easier. There have been many opportunities to study music online, and there are also many scholarships available which make it very easy for composers to develop their knowledge.

1.2 Vernacular keroncong as a new opportunity in contemporary music

Contemporary music, in this case, is not seen as a specific genre that has solid characteristics, for example like we see dangdut or keroncong. Elements and instruments in dangdut and keroncong can become “contemporary music” if they are packaged with a certain orientation that focuses more on ideological struggle, artistic packaging and orientation, avoiding instantaneous processes or purely for entertainment purposes. For example, in one of the following photos (see Figure 1), the musician on the left has a very strong background as a keroncong artist. However, when the keroncong instruments that he masters (flute and cak) are brought into a non-keroncong musical ensemble, it will have a different process logic, followed by a different orientation. This is also part of the “vernacular keroncong” discourse, where the keroncong instrument is presented as a mere medium (musical instrument) that can play any music, and ignores the forms of keroncong music in general (Keroncong Asli, Langgam, Stambul). This is an example of an interesting fact, that keroncong music—the embryo of which has existed since the 16th century and has become a popular music tradition in Indonesia—can be taken as an opportunity for the creative process of creating contemporary music. Keroncong music can no longer be said to be lilting music or has romantic characteristics, but has changed into a free and exploratory expression.

Based on the explanation, then how does the cultural study of music read this interesting phenomenon? What are composers actually doing or fighting for with their works? Are they sensitive to environmental, social, political issues, or busy with their own pragmatic world? These questions are interesting as a motivation to explore how contemporary musical events are viewed in the context of cultural studies. The idea of articulation put forward by Hall and Grossberg is considered relevant for unraveling these questions. Articulation unites various elements to provide a unified meaning (even though it is only temporary), because of the dynamic nature of articulation, it can continue to change and create varied meanings.



Fig. 1. Kata Buni Forum Stage (Doc. @kandhang_)

2 Method

This article uses a qualitative approach by taking two samples of presentations/videos from a program for analysis. The program is October Meeting: Contemporary Music and Musicians which is held annually by Art Music Today Foundation in Yogyakarta (since 2016).² What is observed in the video is the entire narrative that is built, then the researcher takes several key words, gist and parts that are considered relevant to then analyze. The analysis process is carried out by ignoring the musical discussion discussed as material, but rather looking at how the cultural context is built from the discussion. This event is considered representative because it attempts to establish a relationship between compositorist ideas and cultural issues (local-global), identity, creative laboratories, emancipation issues, as well as how each composer actualizes—and also articulates—whatever their ideas are. Observations are supported by literature studies which present theoretical views regarding the sociology of music, musicology and cultural studies.

3 Discussion

The first video analyzed was a video made by Jay Afrisando, an Indonesian composer who completed his doctoral composition studies in America. He explained about “aural diversity”. Aural diversity is a topic that is relatively rarely discussed in the context of the sociology of music. Substantial diversity of hearing highlights how every human being has the same right to listen to music, starting from humans who biologi-

cally have normal listening abilities, to people with disabilities who in fact have hearing deficiencies.

Afrisando (2019) explains that the term aural diversity was coined by John Levack Drever in a series of articles after his study on the effects of hand dryer noise. He also explained another term, namely auraltypical. These words are adapted from neurotypical and neurodiverse used in the autistic community. Neurotypical refers to the normalcy of non-autistic people and the implied tendency to impose their understanding of normalcy on others as normal and natural, while aural diversity refers to the actual hearing diversity that we experience every day and throughout life to varying different degrees, ranging from temporary shifting conditions to unbearable pain due to hearing loss and also very sensitive hearing.

Afrisando (2020) said: “Not only in artistic practice but also in other fields, thinking about aural diversity means thinking about aesthetic possibilities. A creative question such as: ‘Who do we want to show our work to?’ could be a good starting point before deciding what technical aspects should be used to better convey the ‘message’ to listeners, viewers, participants, collaborators, and so on.”

The issue of aural diversity raised by Jay Afrisando is very interesting and is relatively rarely discussed in today's contemporary music landscape, especially in the context of music sociology and music anthropology. Why is this issue less popular? Maybe this is a serious question, because generally music is served for “normal people” or people with perfect hearing. But this is a different issue. It makes sense because music—especially in an industrial context—has long lived under certain dominations that seem to “marginalize” everyone's rights. Despite the lack of interest in this issue, the discussion about “music and disability” has actually been discussed quite sharply. As written in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Disability Studies* (2015), this issue is broadly related to the relationship between music and humanity. Disability is part of the arts and culture construction:

The essays in this volume share a theoretical and methodological connection to Disability Studies, especially its central idea that disability is a social and cultural construction. Disability is shown to be a core feature of the musical identity of music makers (especially composers and performers), something that affects their lives and works and their public reception. Music represents disability in various ways and affirms the notion that disability is a performance, something you do rather than something you are. These essays make the case that disability is not something at the periphery of culture and music, but something central to our art and to our humanity. They also address an important lacuna within a Disability Studies that has mostly overlooked music as a medium through which disability can be constructed. Indeed, as much as a cultural understanding of disability can teach us about music, music also has much to teach us about the culture of disability.

Kolin in *Music as a Tool for Disability Activism* (2021: 7) provides interesting information, that England is one of the first countries to consider this issue:

The presence of disability in professional music has progressed more silently. Musicians with a disability, even a non-apparent one, have to find different approaches, from music learning to their engagements in professional orchestras. The same way professional actors had to show their skills by creating companies within the disabled

community, musicians gathered together to form their own orchestras and ensembles. England has been among the first countries to consider the issue of disability inclusion in the arts and continue to endeavor in this domain.

In a broad context, this issue can also be said to be interesting, because it is very emancipatory, namely opening insight/information that “music” in the context of human hearing cannot be generalized. Afrisando entitled this video “The Future of Listening” to emphasize that human hearing conditions are increasingly diverse. This depends on the features and biological conditions which are also different for each human being, can be inborn, developed, or face certain challenges when the environment does not support listening to music carefully. In short, it can be underlined that people with hearing that is considered relatively “normal” also have an “ab-normal” side that they are not aware of. For example, people who live every day in big cities with massive quantities of transportation traffic. They are exposed to noise and it has a significant effect on hearing quality. Slamet A. Sjukur and other figures (2014) through the Noise Free Society and the Jakarta Academy have discussed the issue of ear health for many people, including anticipating deafness from an early age. He thinks that deafness can attack anyone without realizing it. The issue raised by Afrisando explains how (passive) hearing is related to how humans listen: their awareness, what influences them, whether they accept or reject the sounds around them, as well as the positive and negative impacts of listening activities, whether they are aware or unconsciously.

Clarke (2003: 120) explains that listening is part of cognitive psychology which can be linked to the cultural study of music:

There are no chapters on emotion or meaning in music, the outlook is almost entirely concerned with the Western classical tradition, and any sense of the way in which music is culturally embedded is almost entirely absent. This looks like a bleakly unlikely prospect for any attempt to argue for the relevance of the psychology of music to its cultural study. But the cognitive tradition, for all its dominance in contemporary psychology, is not the only way to study mental life and human behavior, and a rather different prospect for the psychology of music comes into view if a different psychological starting point is adopted. I use the remainder of this chapter to focus on listening—the “central territory” of Deutsch’s book,

As seen in this statement, the central area for cognitive psychology—in relation to cultural studies—is that human hearing cannot be separated from the environment and cultural situation in which he lives. Someone who lives in a rural area, with an environment that is relatively friendly to noise, tends to have good hearing quality, compared to city people who are exposed to noise every day. Cultural studies look critically at human existence and all of its emotional-cognitive responses in responding to the sounds around them with full awareness.

What Afrisando said was also related to the issue of cultural articulation, where before this issue was raised, hearing was only generally understood. It seems as if common problems faced by humans, for example deafness, can only occur in old age, even though this problem can occur at any time. Articulation describes how the partial conditions of the reality of auditory diversity can be understood as a unity of meaning. The unity of meaning is “how every human being is aware of his hearing profile and

has full awareness of what he hears". This also does not look at age, gender, education or not, but applies to everyone, both people who are considered to have "normal" hearing and people with disabilities who have congenital hearing problems. Thus, it is important to see and rethink the cultural study of music as a very emancipatory study for this problem.

Second analysis, a fact about Women Composers (*Perempuan Komponis*)³ which brings up gender issues, which have previously almost never been discussed explicitly in the context of contemporary music in Indonesia. The issues and activities offered by *Perempuan Komponis* are very interesting, because they try to read the possibility of women's emancipation in the context of contemporary music, which has so far been dominated by men. In fact, their focus is not only gender in the narrow sense. The collectivity promoted by *Perempuan Komponis* sees the presence of women as their own potential, not as an arena for criticism of male domination.

Titon (2003: 175) stated that gender is also one of the concerns of the cultural study of music. Today, the cultural study of music asks different questions, ones that bear on the relationship of music to region, race, class, gender, politics, ethnicity, belief, identity, money, power, and the production of knowledge. Our questions concern music as lived experience, as commodity, as social practice, and as cultural symbol. Titon also added that gender discussed in the cultural study of music is present in the context of new musicology, as a response to traditional musicology. Challenges to traditional musicology's values have also arisen from within. A generation of musicologists influenced by cultural studies and practicing the "new musicology" is enlarging the predominantly male canon to include *Perempuan Komponis* and composers who are people of color; is broadening the scope of musicology's subject to include jazz, Broadway show tunes, and other formerly classed music; and is challenging traditional musicology's historical and theoretical procedures on grounds of race, class, and gender discrimination (2003: 176). Fisandra and Swaratyagita (2022) wrote about the brief background behind the emergence of *Perempuan Komponis*: such as inferiority, domestication, unrepresented, and unconnected with each other regarding their journey and career challenges—prompted the formation of *Female Composers: Forum & Lab*. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, this community was assembled online through various digital platforms for the opportunity to meet, dialogue, and initiate several joint activities. *Perempuan Komponis* focuses on the women's movement of composers as the practice of creating relationships and networks. Through contemporary anthropology, this story aims to show how *Perempuan Komponis* are involved in the variety of interweaving between human and non-human actors that allows for the meaning-making process to occur. We argue that the indexicality assembled in the offline space is the dialectic of women reflecting and interpreting the process of *Becoming a composer in Indonesia*.

What is important to note about the presence of *Women Composers* is that they do not specifically voice issues related to women's rights, but they exist as an egalitarian space and are very collective. They do not have specific missions like women's organizations that voice social issues, oppression or human rights, but rather want to be

present to show that there is a specific potential behind the presence of women in contemporary Indonesian music. The latest program they released (2023)—one of which is releasing a book containing the writings of composers—shows how each composer processes and faces their own challenges as women, especially those who have families. This fact is interesting to study in the context of cultural studies from a gender perspective. This means that women also have opportunities in a world that is generally dominated by men, even though they do not fight back.

Both Jay Afrisando and Perempuan Komponis raise specific issues that have almost never been discussed before in the contemporary music landscape in Indonesia. The issues of “aural diversity” (diversity of hearing) and “gender”—although not identical to feminism—thus provide a very interesting new discourse. Their ideas are part of an articulation effort that can be interpreted. Articulation is the production of identity over difference, unity from fragments, structure across practices. Articulation connects practices, effects, texts, meanings, experiences, politics, which are intertwined (Grossberg, 1992: 54). Articulation is based on efforts to observe facts, then generate ideas that can be conveyed/explained. The ideas raised can be interpreted openly and dialogued so that the same understanding can then be obtained - on the one hand - even though there are many differences. The unity formed by this combination or articulation, is always a “complex structure”: a structure in which things are related, both through their differences and through their similarities. This requires that the mechanisms linking different traits must be demonstrated—for no “necessary correspondence” or expressive homology can be assumed as given. This also means—since a combination is a structure (articulated combination) and not a random association—that there will be a structured relationship between its parts, namely a relationship of dominance and subordination (Hall, 1980d: 325). Articulation is also a combination, connection, or link in a chain and an act of establishing and holding together to put something in relation to giving expression to it. Articulations consist of different elements connected through certain types of relationships. It is a unit formed from different parts. Again, if the elements are not articulated, then they are separate and do not exist in the same plane. Articulation has a double meaning based on its definition, as a structure or connection and as an action in conveying fluent verbal expressions. In structural linguistics, the word denotes a practice that allows the utterance of a limited set of sounds with unlimited potential meaning. In political rhetoric, Articulation is a practice that allows different interests to connect into a group for political purposes. It seems clear, therefore, that articulation refers to many different “things”: what appears to be a single, monolithic word has different connotations and meanings, which vary according to context. It is not surprising then that the concept of articulation consists of a constellation of various elements around a diverse set of ideas and practices (Kortesoja, 2023: 7). Based on this theoretical basis, the videos from Jay Afrisando and Perempuan Komponis are very relevant to read as part of the articulation.

We will return to the following questions: How does the cultural study of music read this phenomenon? What are composers actually doing or fighting for with their works? Are they sensitive to environmental, social, political issues, or busy with their own pragmatic world? If you look at what Clayton, et al (2003) said, the way cultural

studies of music reads contemporary music events is by mapping to what extent musical events have intersections with cultural studies. First, by releasing music from its aesthetic (material) context. Second, look at the issues offered, whether they are relevant to cultural studies, or whether they are more appropriately included in cultural musicology, new musicology, ethnomusicology, or art performance studies.

Questions regarding—what are composers actually doing or fighting for with their works? Are they sensitive to environmental, social, political issues, or busy with their own pragmatic “world”? This is an interesting critical question for further discussion. Basically, a piece of music is not the final result. A composer is an individualist who generally often works alone (when producing works). What’s interesting to read is the idea on the contrary. Neither Jay Afrisando and Perempuan Komponis speak explicitly about their work. However, they put forward more ideas and actions that can be done for the people around them, at least the environment in Indonesia. “Globalization” may result in a complicated definition and can be discussed in another article, but the issue of identity is still relevant. Both Jay Afrisando and the Female Composer are fighting for identity. Afrisando stated that “identity” is diversity itself, diversity which is shown through various types of people who are able to hear in their own ways and features. Thus, identity is not singular or fixed, but, as Hall said, identity is something dynamic. Meanwhile, Perempuan Komponis promote female identity, as an opportunity that can be created and given a special marker. In this case, women are not the object of study, but rather the subject themselves, who are trying to bring out their “identity” to convey meanings.

4 Conclusion

In general, it can be said that the cultural study of music has a great opportunity to be looked at and rethought, especially how this discipline is used to understand and solve problems in the contemporary music scene, especially in Indonesia. This study is still very representative to be considered alongside ethnomusicology, or applied ethnomusicology. It is important and representative because the cultural study of music is assumed to be able to solve problems more critically because of the breadth of the scalpel (multi-discipline) it has. It is also relevant because Indonesian society, which is said to have a complex structure, is also close to multiculturalism because of its cultural diversity. Of course, this article is only a kind of introduction and reflection which is far from scientific perfection. The study can continue because in my opinion the topic of reading musical events with the scalpel of the cultural study of music is an important matter and is relatively rarely discussed.

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