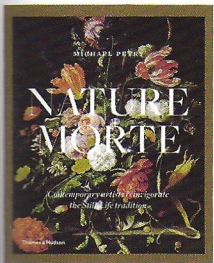
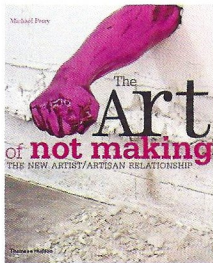




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Common Practice 21C: MUSIC FESTIVAL EXPLORES CLASSICAL, CONTEMPORARY AND CROSS-CULTURAL MUSIC

RICE STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND HOUSTON'S ASIAN AND ARTS COMMUNITIES GATHERED FOR COMMON PRACTICE 21C: CLASSICAL, CONTEMPORARY AND CROSS-CULTURAL MUSIC, a three-day music festival hosted by the Shepherd School of Music in March.

In a celebration of common elements that span both real and perceived divides between Eastern and Western classical music, Common Practice 21C brought together international guest artists and Shepherd School faculty and students with an interest in exploring the intersections between these types of music.

Concerts, lectures and a student composers' reading session showcased music from Taiwan, China, Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Japan and the United States. Highlights included an evening concert in which guest artists performed on traditional Chinese instruments, including the pipa (a handheld, four-stringed instrument that is plucked); the zheng (also a plucked string instrument, similar to a zither); and the sheng (a mouth organ with numerous pipes).

The festival was organized by Shih-Hui Chen, professor of composition and theory. "In Western music, the Common Practice era — roughly 1600 to 1900 — was defined by its adherence to customary harmonic and melodic practices. Similarly, older Chinese music remained grounded in its own traditional perspective and performance practice," Chen explained. "I believe strongly that in our age of digital communication, perceived barriers between countries and continents have shifted, bringing humanity closer together while blurring the lines between cultures. My desire for the future is to nurture the creation of a second Common Practice in music, one that transcends ethnocentric barriers."

—HOLLI CLEMENTS