

Michael Burt

Review of the supervisor

- overall evaluation
- composition review
- written thesis review

Michael Burt joined the department of composition in the most inconvenient time of the deepest pandemic lockdown of 2020. Despite the impossible circumstances he was able to settle down and start to work as the new graduate student of composition.

Since the very beginning Michael and I have concentrated on looking for an own recognizable compositional voice, when identifying potentially new structural, aesthetical, poetical and technical visions for his upcoming two years of studies.

During Michael's work on multiple composition for solo piano and several acousmatic pieces the idea of "number pi" as some kind of structural actuator has derived as an interesting compositional topic, which led Michael through the rest of his studies - number pi as the numeric constant which suggests architecture for pitch and rhythmic values across newly conceived pieces.

Michael was able to develop his craft of composing / sound design when approaching his acousmatic music as well and he improved vastly his craft of orchestration when working (for the first time ever) on the large score "Subversion" for symphony orchestra. That one turned into becoming his diploma work. The Prague Philharmonia performance of the score was very successful and proofed the fact he learned much about orchestration, sound dramaturgy, notation and orchestral music practice.

Despite the more or less tight pandemic situation Michael was also able to join number of very successful art collaborations with film makers and dancer which helped him to develop a sense for group intermedia creation.

Since Michael has been part of the payed English program, large portion of his daily time was dedicated to earning money in order to pay for his tuition. This fact sometimes collided with not always being able to join community events or concerts. Particularly this was to be observed when finishing his written part of the thesis, where more concentration on the recherche phase and research along with less deadline-oriented pressure would help to reach more secured study result.

It needs to be stressed that apparently not all study information were conveyed properly to Michael during his studies which may resulted into various misunderstandings, particularly with crediting and study plan orientation. As the Michael's main instructor I would like to emphasize these kind of communication issues as an important feedback towards the university administration.

Following the facts above, I would like to praise Michael for his ability to orientate himself in the new country, new culture, new school, new community, new study plan - all during the utmost unpleasant time of pandemics, with problematic on-line support of all kind.

I strongly believe, that despite the global pandemic circumstances Michael was able to enrich his compositional "vocabulary", music&technology abilities to work in an intermedia discourse as well as traditional craft of composition from perspective of structural attitude, scoring, form building, sound dramaturgy and the knowledge of musical instruments.

Subversion for Symphony Orchestra

review of the supervisor

Michael Burt was able to work with chamber symphony orchestra for the first time. Thus he faced multiple challenges at the same time, when conceiving relatively large form of music, dealing with large amount of musical instruments and their groups, focusing on articulation design of them as well as dealing with the actual practice of orchestral performance.

As such, Michael received great result and perhaps even better listening feedback to how the score imagination works in the sounding reality. He acquired knowledge of how studio experience can influence on the acoustic instrumental sound and vice versa, as well as he realized how complex developing individual orchestral parts can be.

I strongly believe Michael delivered impressive piece of new music, which is completely consistent on the compositional level, innovative with respect to his own composer's voice and challenging when pointing out towards potential work in the future.

suggested mark: A

Manufacturing Expectation and Predictiviness in Orchestral Music with Respect to My Own Compositional Practice

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Michael Burt decided to follow up on the most inspirable and high profile research in music cognition, which has developed vastly over past three decades. In his diploma text he examines the term and cognitive process of expectation in music composition. The topic to be of a particular interest for the student derives from his thoughts about how an expectation can compositionally be created, how specific compositional strategy can be developed in order to shape a specific type of expectation by the listener.

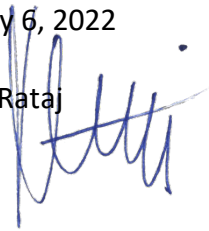
I was very happy with the method he developed when approaching analytically three compositions (Penderecki, Silvestrov, Burt) in order to clarify how three different strategies of such manufacturing expectation can work in reality. And I believe he was indeed able to explain how such manufacturing can be seen from the perspective of a practical compositional methods.

On the other hand I also believe Michael would need even more research to be done in the world of music cognition in order to dive deeper under the immediate listening experience or emotional feeling. Rather limited time he was able to spend with the diploma text reveals much potential for future research and further development of the most fascinating discourse. I am very happy though, that Michael approached the topic and brought it to the more intensive community interest.

suggested mark: C

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