

SUMMER 2016

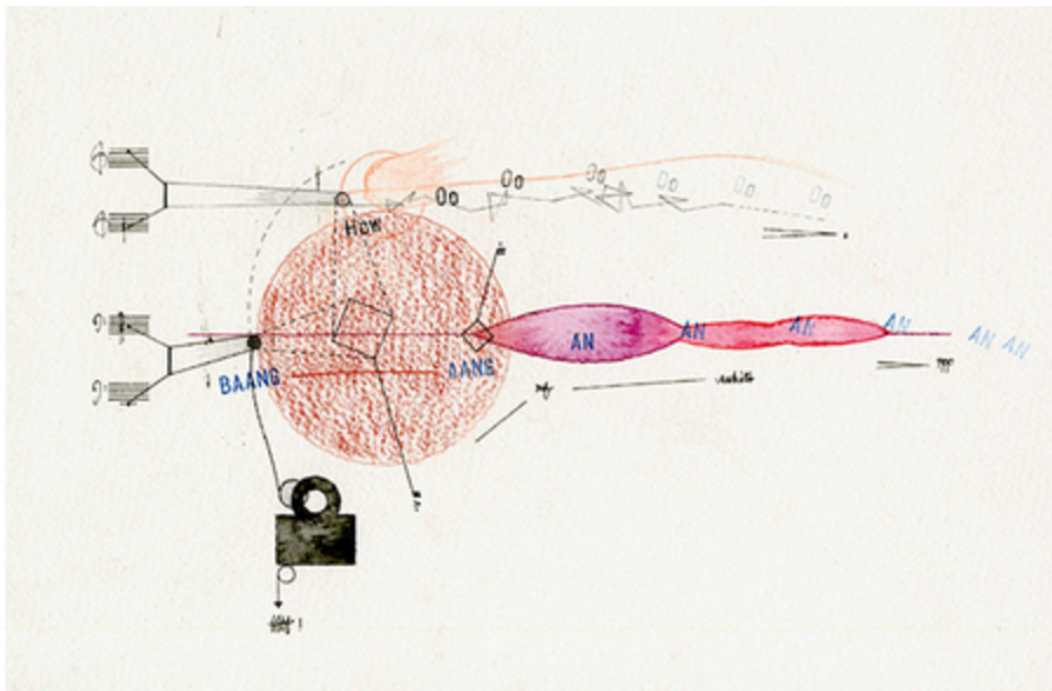
ARTISTS AND IDENTITY

SAMSON YOUNG

STOP TELLING ME to stop dichotomizing the East and the West. I am not done yet. Stop dismissing my site of resistance. Somebody else's version of permeable identity always wins, and then I get pushed to keep moving along, when my lived reality is actually anchored unless I am pushed or pulled.

We might be able to imagine a transnational composer, but where is a truly transnational music to be found? John Cage's project has failed Asia. The institutions of music continue to neglect and negate Asian composers. Composers outside the West are invisible in their own concert halls. Debunking the East-West binary involves not only a disruption of the essentialized concept of the East but an equally rigorous interrogation of the essentialized concept of the West. We must begin by confronting the very language with which we describe the auditory and the act of composition. What does it mean to "orchestrate" and to "compose"? Could one orchestrate and compose without reproducing the power structures that are implicit in these terminologies? What is the new silence, the new decay, the new reverb, the new resonance?

Samson Young is a sound artist and composer based in Hong Kong.



Samson Young, 4 Gauge Elephant Gun, 2015, ink, watercolor, colored pencil, and stamp on paper, 8 × 11 1/2". From the series "Studies for Pastoral Music," 2015–.