

“The Singing Bone”

Bone tubes and pipes, experimental music archaeology and ethnology. A workshop.

Objective:

Research into the sounding possibilities of bone pipes recognized as sound generators and of bone pipes/tubes not yet established as such. To investigate the possibilities to play melodies or use them as signalling instruments or noise generators.

Method:

1. Active participation in experimental archaeology as a means of investigation, experimenting without theoretical restraints, including experiments in playing techniques.
2. Demonstrations of and information about ethnological bone pipes, whistles, calls and sound generators.

Introduction:

Many bone pipes and whistles that are excavated can be recognized as such by the presence of sound producing elements like a window with a voicing lip or a rim that is obliquely thinned or shows an indent. However, some bone tubes, e.g. those excavated in Ajvide (Gotland, Sweden) lack details that recognize them on first sight as sound producing objects. Ethnological whistles and calls show a wide array of sound producing elements and playing techniques that can suggest possibilities unthought of and/or untried up to now: apart from blowing and air-jet voicing, sucking, lip voicing, reed voicing (single, double), friction sounding, buzzing (mirliton) and rattling effects. Some sound producing elements are made of materials that would be lost in the archaeological record and so would not be recognized. Because of conservational issues it is not possible to

experiment on the excavated bone pipes. A solution is to work with experimental reconstructions and hypothetical models starting from finds from Europe dating from the Stone Age up to the modern time. This can take the form of workshops of experimental musical archaeology led by specialists in the fields of reconstructing musical instruments, music archaeology and ethnological instruments.

Date:

19. - 21.11.2014

Venue:

University of Helsinki, Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies/Musicology & Archaeology, Finland

Organizers:

Riitta Rainio & Annemies Tamboer in association with the European Music Archaeology Project (EMAP)

Participants:

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