

**Maestro Tan Dun, Musician and Composer, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador**  
**Panel Discussion, “How does culture enable environmental sustainability?”**

**Transcript of the address at the Hangzhou International Congress, as delivered**

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I heard wonderful speeches, I have some very common feelings, what they delivered is a cultural philosophy. To me, a cultural philosophy is very important, which influenced my career, my artistic decisions, the concepts in the music creation. For example, as a UNESCO ambassador, how to work with UNESCO, how to deliver whatever UNESCO wants to achieve, are future signals, it's a cultural philosophy. In the past what I have done, as a student, you are atomically want to achieving the greatest music in history, you want to be Beethoven, but it's impossible to be Beethoven because it's no longer a Beethoven age; then you have to come with an updated philosophy, artistic philosophy, how can you be today's Beethoven? Music is made of do, ré, mi, fa, so, la, si, do. The simple words, it is the scales, forming the sonority, the code, the melody form. But in China, I found it very interested, for thousands of years people are using organic sounds to make the music. Then I found this tradition has been lost. Why not me doing something with it? Because I was this wild boy, with this Beethoven dreams. So I start to work with another system: an organic music system, using the gestures, the sound sonorities, and the shape of the nature to make my orchestration, my melodies, and my orchestration. I composed a lot of film music. But I also made my water music, as an earth instrument, as a sound of earth. I used all kind of ceramic music instrument making. I composed wind music, using the paper, all kinds of paper to carry sounds of the wind. Then I did my architecture music, using the architecture dreams, and shapes, I worked with garden operas, to work with all kinds of gardens in the world, reactivating the sleeping beauties of oriental gardens in the world. With UNESCO, I am working on the secret songs and languages among women; this is the only secret language in the world. That has been vanishing, there are very few old women knowing that. Since 5 years I start to make films, I made 13 films on those vanishing languages and beautiful sounds and visual. And as language, very few old women know. We have to create a women's secret philosophy not just for this dying tradition, but for all kind of women's thoughts, products and culture. This is the only way to make things to survive in the modern days. Because I'm not an anthropologist, historian, or a museum builder, but I am an artist. What we can do is to create, not just a piece, an art, the music, but we need to create a cultural philosophy to make all kind of people in the world to participate, on how to prevent, to keep this dying tradition of the women's secretive language. I want to create a modern website, a secret website for the women to communicate on their thoughts, like the ancient women, and talk about how they continued the value of family, of society, nurtured husbands, and everything that man made. Everything behind men is the mother, the daughter, the sister. So that's what I am doing to create artistic philosophy for the dying arts. For UNESCO, I am also working with New-Zealand, Australia, China, and Europe and this is my bird project. In Chinese music, Chinese music instruments always start with a bird singing, every Chinese instrument. The bird music is very important. The bird project, where is the forest. Through that I want to create another cultural philosophy where everybody could participate. And what is the meaning of making the music? I am a Chinese musician, but I want to create a music philosophy. Everybody could share my music, my theory. I wish my music, Chinese music could be taught in world

music institutions but I also think that Chinese concepts, Chinese music should teach all the world music. Thank you.

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