

DVD Program Notes

Part One: Annette Vandegorne, Curator

Curator's Note

Satisfied since 1971 that acousmatic music is the alpha and omega of all aesthetic and technological research in electroacoustics, that its very existence has changed the conditions of production, reception, and perception of music, I could only offer for this *Computer Music Journal* DVD music produced for these new imaginary relationships to sound, without images.

Teaching the techniques of *écriture* for media and acousmatic composition at the higher level of the music conservatories since 1986 has finally created an acousmatic "school" in Belgium with its own specific character. I propose that the listener discover here a selection from three generations of Belgian composers, as well as a guest of honor, Hans Tutschku, Professor at Harvard, who combines the rigor of his culture of origin, Germany, with a richness of sound and musical immediacy of play on a sounding body—in this case of old pianos.

1. *YAWAR FIESTA: Acte I, Condor (extrait: Peuple aux fêtes emplumées)*—Annette Vandegorne (Chief: Nicholas Isherwood, bass; Chorus: Nicholas Isherwood, bass; Paul-Alexandre Dubois, baritone)

Can space, written and performed live, lead to expression and dramatization. . . Music? Opera? Even if the project does not involve any singers on stage, a majority of sound material derives from the voice. This is not an electroacoustic work (with its research materials and abstract writing),

but the dramatization of a text by, among other things, the placement of the sounds and spatial figures. The technology of the music finds a link with the tradition of singing opera.

The libretto describes how incantatory ritual in Aeschylean tragedy represents the fighting of duels within us, concepts of life opposed, and is symbolized by the struggle of a condor and a bull that still takes place during the "feast of blood" in some villages founded by the Spanish in the Peruvian Andes.

An example between poverty and the power of money, "Who to cut the cord of misery?" This is also the attraction of desire and brute force. Only art brings the two forces together, the author concludes: "That here at least where the words are acts for what they are: the party continues. Here at least where the words are sung, all come together in games of shadow and light."

The chief of the Indians, the timbre of bass, reassurance personified by a declamatory questioning, spiritual wisdom whose strength always wins eternal in duration, the material contingencies, political and economic. (The Dalai Lama is a current example.)

The choir of the Indians is organized by alternating opposite timbres crossing all the text, the choice of words in the overall shape of the three acts.

YAWAR FIESTA was produced at Studio Métamorphoses d'Orphée, Musiques & Recherches, Ohain, Belgium.

Text (translation: Anne-Marie Glasheen)

Chief: Peuple aux fêtes emplumées, aux femmes en corolles de laines rouges, allons!

Chief: *People of the plumed festivals, whose women wear red wool corollas, let us go!*

Faisons savoir, aux maîtres des enclos et des arènes,

Inform the masters of the pens and arenas,

Que nous viendrons, comme chaque année, avec le fils des espaces sans barrière.

That we shall be there, like every year, with the son of the wide open spaces.

Qu'ils se préparent pour la corrida. Elle est à eux! A nous la lutte, Comme chaque jour que nous vivons.

Tell them to prepare for the bullfight. It is theirs! Here's to our fight, Like every day that we live.

Chœur: A genoux, taureau! Plie, ploie sous celui qui nous venge!

Chorus: On your knees, bull! Bow, bend beneath he who avenges us!

Que sa victoire gonfle nos moissons et que ses vastes ailes les protègent!

May his victory swell our harvests and may his vast wings protect us!

Chef: Ils ont besoin de la souffrance et de la peur ceux qui possèdent, car ils règnent sur du néant.

Chief: They have a need for suffering and fear those who possess, for they reign over nothingness.

Vous, je vous ai conduit vers celui qui mange la mort pour qu'elle ne reste pas inutile et serve encore.

You, I have led you to the one who eats death so that it might not remain useless but serve again.

Chœur: Qu'il soit notre héraut! Que sa colère d'otage parle pour nous.

Chorus: May he be our herald! May his hostage's anger speak for us.

Figure 1. Annette Vande Gorne.

Souffrance et peur, nous pouvons en donner: nos greniers en sont pleins plus que de récoltes!

Suffering and fear, we can dish them out: we have more of them than crops in our granaries!

Chef: Il est temps. Regagnez vos maisons où dorment encore les rêves féconds de vos femmes.

Chief: It is time. Return to your houses where the fertile dreams of your wives still slumber.

Allez, non comme des poules qu'on emmène au marché la tête en bas, mais comme en troupe joyeuse qui escorte son champion.

Go, not like chickens being taken to market their heads hung down, but like a merry band escorting its champion.

Gens du maïs et des fèves, soyez comme le ciel qui brûle et qui brille au-dessus de vos champs.

People of the corn and beans, be like the sky that burns and blazes above our pastures.

Chœur: Taureau, nous voici, et avec nous, ton cavalier aux éperons en couteaux de boucher.

Chorus: Bull, we are here, and with us, your horseman with spurs like butcher's knives.

Following her classical studies at the Royal Conservatories of Mons and Brussels, and her studies with Jean Absil, **Annette Vande Gorne** chanced upon acousmatics when on a training position in France. Instantly convinced by the works of François Bayle and Pierre Henry of the revolutionary nature of this art form (disruption of perception, renewal of composition through spectromorphological writing and listening conduction, historical importance of the movement), she took a few training



positions to grab its basics, then studied musicology (Université libre de Bruxelles) and electroacoustic composition with Guy Reibel and Pierre Schaeffer at the Conservatoire national supérieur in Paris.

She founded and managed Musiques & Recherches and the Métamorphoses d'Orphée studios (Ohain, 1982). She also launched a series of concerts and an acousmatics festival called L'Espace du son (Brussels, 1984; annual since 1994), after assembling a 60-loudspeaker system, an acousmonium derived from the sound projection system designed by François Bayle. She is the editor of the musical aesthetics review *Lien* and *Répertoire Électro-CD* (1993, 1997, 1998), a directory of electroacoustic works. She also founded the composition competition Métamorphoses and the spatialized performance competition Espace du son. She has gradually put together Belgium's only documentation center on that art (available online at www.musiques-recherches.be).

She gives numerous spatialized acousmatic music performances,

both of her own works and those of international composers.

Professor of electroacoustic composition at the Royal Conservatory in Liège (1986), then Brussels (1987) and Mons (1993), she founded an autonomous Electroacoustic Music section at the latter, which was later (2002) integrated to the European graduate studies framework. Since 1999, she has been managing an international summer training session on spatialization and, since 1987, on electroacoustic composition.

Her works can be heard in every festival and on every radio program presenting media-based (previously "tape") music. Her current work focuses on various energetic and kinesthetic archetypes. Nature and the physical world are models for an abstract and expressive musical language. She is passionate about two other fields of research: the various relationships to word, sound, and meaning provided by electroacoustic technology, and the composition of space seen as the fifth musical parameter and its relationship to the other four parameters and the archetypes being used. Her work falls essentially in the acousmatic category, including the *Tao* suite and *Ce qu'a vu le vent d'Est*, which renews electroacoustic music's ties with the past, with a few incursions in other art forms, including theatre, dance, sculpture, etc. (translation: François Couture)

2. *Protopia/Tesseract*— Elizabeth L. Anderson

The initial idea for the acousmatic work *Protopia/Tesseract* was inspired by a literary interpretation of the tesseract, defined in the children's fantasy novel *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle as a concept

Figure 2. Elizabeth Anderson.



Unveiling Spatio-Temporal Pertinences in Acousmatic Music, supervised by Denis Smalley, centers on the perception of electroacoustic music and the elaboration of a metaphorical language for electroacoustic art. Funding for her doctorate was provided by an Overseas Research Scholarship as well as subsidies from the Fondation SPES and the British Federation of Women Graduates Charitable Foundation.

Elizabeth Anderson's music has received prizes in diverse international competitions. Her works are frequently performed in international festivals in Europe, North and South America, and Asia. Details about existing commercial recordings of her music can be found online at her personal Web site (www.helios-and-selene.com) and at ElectroCD (www.electrocd.com/en/bio/anderson_el/discog/). Her monograph disc *l'Envol* will be released by empreintes DIGITALEs in early 2014. She has been invited and funded by diverse international institutions to realize compositions, as well as to give performances and conferences about her doctoral research.

Elizabeth Anderson organized and developed a comprehensive course of electroacoustic composition at the Academy of Music in Soignies (Belgium) from 1994 until 2002. In 2003–2004, she joined the faculty of the department of electroacoustic composition at the Royal Conservatory of Mons. She is currently respon-

Figure 3. Ingrid Drese.



sible for the course on semiology in electroacoustic music there, which is based on concepts she developed in her doctoral dissertation.

3. *Io*—Ingrid Drese

This third work tries to join different elements, materials, and strategies from its preceding compositions: *Voix de l'aurore* and *Plis de la nuit*. The first with fluidity, sonic geology, and melancholy; the second with lightness and weightlessness.

Metro Denfert-Rochereau, Observatoire in Paris.

The idea from separation, distance and ascent is the central preoccupation.

Io was commissioned by Ars Musica, Brussels, 2011, and was realized in the composer's studio.

Ingrid Drese first studied piano, chamber music, music history, and music analysis before signing up for the electroacoustic composition program at the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) in Brussels, then for the same program at the RCM in Mons, in Annette Vande Gorne's class, where she finished with a Prix supérieur in 1998.

where intergalactic travel is made possible through spatio-temporal compression.

Much of the sound material for the work was created during a residency at the Centre de Création Musicale Iannis Xenakis (CCMIX) in Paris with the support of Le service de coopération et d'action culturelle de l'ambassade de France en Belgique. The work was composed in the multichannel electroacoustic studio at City University; the studio Métamorphoses d'Orphée at Musiques & Recherches in Ohain, Belgium; and the Studio Akousma in the Académie de Musique de Soignies, Belgium. I am grateful to Annette Vande Gorne and Jean-Louis Poliart for having opened their institutions to me. This work is dedicated to them.

Protopia/Tesseract received the first prize at the Musica Nova electroacoustic composition competition in Prague in 2008, and an honourable mention in the VII International Electroacoustic Music Contest of São Paulo in 2007. *Protopia/Tesseract* was realized with the assistance of the Communauté française: Direction Générale de la Culture, Service de la Musique in Brussels, Belgium.

The work is recorded on the compact disc *Electro AC*, produced by the agency Wallonie-Bruxelles Musiques, under the auspices of Wallonie-Bruxelles International and the Ministère de la Communauté française Wallonie-Bruxelles.

Elizabeth Anderson is a composer specializing in electroacoustic techniques. In 1994 she received the Premier Prix, and in 1998 the Diplôme Supérieur, in electroacoustic music composition at the Royal Conservatory of Mons with Annette Vande Gorne. Elizabeth Anderson completed a PhD at City University London in 2011. Her dissertation, *Materials, Meaning and Metaphor*:

She helped develop and implement a course in Acousmatic Music Composition (1996) at the Académie de musique de Soignies (Belgium) and taught acousmatics (*Traité des objets musicaux et perception*) at the RCM in Mons (Belgium) in 2004–2005. Since 2010 she is professor in acoustic composition in the same Royal Conservatory of Mons.

Although she focuses her composition work on concert music, she also likes to collaborate on stage projects, films, and music videos. Several major institutions have commissioned works from her, including Ina-GRM (Paris, France) and *Musiques & Recherches* (Ohain, Belgium).

Her works have been programmed for Belgian and foreign festivals, and have won several competitions: Electroacoustic Composition Award, Royal Academy of Belgium (1997); Noroit-Léonce Petitot International Award (Arras, France, 1998); *Métamorphoses Biennial Acousmatic Composition Competition* (Brussels, Belgium, 2000).

Invited by the Groupe de musique expérimentale de Marseille (GMEM, France), she also took part in a Québec-Belgium exchange program in 1996, the Futura Festival in Crest (France) in August 2001, the Rien à voir Festival in Montreal (Quebec) in April 2002, and the Ars Musica Festival in Brussels (Belgium) in April 2008.

She also teaches piano. (translation: François Couture)

4. *Prologue for an image*—Daniel Perez Hajdu

This would be a gesture of going to . . .

A birth.

An embodiment.

An emergence.

An outgrowth of different nature from what it grows out.

And that would be the image.

The image that takes place in the mind of a listener who would also be some mechanic of his thoughts.

—*And the image has to come! And it must!*

That's the project. The idea. My own image of the thing.

It should be possible to provoke some elsewhere. Something that leaks out and would be plural.

An ideal transfer from a domain to another, and one that happens just there, without looking for it.

The metamorphosis of a reality into another.

A music into an image.

A music in an image.

In consciousness or unconsciousness.

An appearance in the fog.

A vision without materiality, projection of an ecstatic dream.

Daniel Perez Hajdu (Havana). Having left the image, crosses the road and arrives at sound. As a result, frequents the Royal Conservatory of Mons and its acousmatic department (there is talk of montage, which is convenient). Now teaching there.

Sometime did, along the way, exhibitions here and there (filming, installing, or assembling). Concerts as well, in groups and mainly with a guitar in hand, in something that bears some resemblance to rock and especially to noise-based improvisation.

Today would be more centered on acousmatic explorations. Especially the tensions between abstract and iconic sound forms. Or the playing with perceived heard images.



Sounds and music for the theater as well. Articles also, when the occasion comes. Would quite like to write a hit, just one.

5. *Klaviersammlung (piano collection)*—Hans Tutschku

Sixteen-channel electroacoustic composition; duration: 9'58"; studio: Harvard University, 2011; dedicated to Christoph von Blumröder; first performance: 28 October 2011, University of Cologne.

The idea for *Klaviersammlung* developed over several years. Each time I visited the University of Cologne, I was fascinated by the long hallway between the musicology department and the concert hall, which houses an impressive collection of desolate pianos from different centuries, charged with musical remembrances. One walks with respect, almost on tiptoes along them, to not disturb their dreams of a better past. Many times I thought about how their sounds could become the source material for a new composition. In July 2011, I finally spent some hours and elicited quite "un-pianistic" sonic expressions from some of the instruments. A large spectrum of those played sequences, together with their

Figure 5. Hans Tutschku.



transformations, became the starting point for an outrageous sound travel into the sonic world of piano.

Christoph von Blumröder's relentless work for the study and performance of electroacoustic and acousmatic music has been an inspiration for my own work for many years. *Klaviersammlung* is an homage to him; a sounding, rattling, screeching, and singing present for his 60th birthday.

Hans Tutschku (born in Weimar, Germany) has been a member of the "Ensemble for intuitive music Weimar" since 1982. He studied electronic music composition at the College of Music, Dresden, and has had since 1989 the opportunity to participate in several concert cycles of Karlheinz Stockhausen to learn the art of sound direction. He further studied sonology and electroacoustic composition at the Royal Conservatory in the Hague (Holland) in 1991–1992.

1994 followed a one-year study stay at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM) in Paris. He taught in 1995–1996 as a guest professor of electroacoustic composition in Weimar. In 1996 he participated in composition workshops with Klaus Huber and Brian Ferneyhough. During 1997–2001 he taught electroacoustic

composition at IRCAM, and from 2001 to 2004 at the Conservatory of Montbéliard.

In May 2003 he completed a doctorate (PhD) with Jonty Harrison at the University of Birmingham. During the spring term 2003 he was the Edgar Varèse Gast Professor" at the Technical University Berlin.

Since September 2004 Hans Tutschku has been working as composition professor and director of the electroacoustic studios at Harvard University (Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA).

He is the winner of many international composition competitions, among others: Bourges, CIMESP São Paulo, Hanns Eisler Prize, Prix Ars Electronica, Prix Noroit, and Prix Musica Nova. In 2005 he received the Culture Prize of the City of Weimar.

6. *Dragonfly*—Laurent Delforge

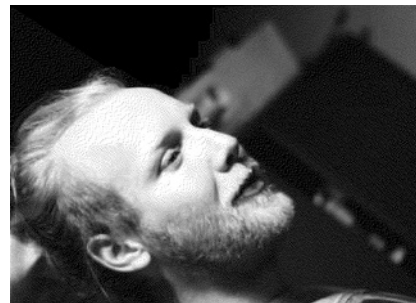
Dragonfly is a continuation of my two previous pieces, *Nautilus* and *Khââ*. It feeds on the border, close to my heart, between the artificial and the natural. Artificial because this kind of work is of a complex craft. There are numerous "snippets" of studio work that shape, sound by sound, the musicality of this mechanism, even perhaps this sonic scheme. . .

Miniaturist precision has always been a field of research and development for me. Equally, it appears to be a fascination.

But these devices that are present in the composition, these countless fragments of sound, these confrontations of materials, these ruptures of plans and of colors, are brought to recompose another more global movement and to recreate a natural musical logic.

Sometimes preventing the material from developing according to

Figure 6. Laurent Delforge.



it own logic enables me to sculpt a new one.

Just as a swarm of insects with their own paths, sometimes chaotic, form a homogeneous cloud that moves as a whole.

Laurent Delforge is a composer and musician based in Brussels. He finished his degree in acousmatic composition in 2008, working with Annette Vande Gorne at the Royal Conservatory of Mons, where he currently teaches electroacoustic instrumentation.

He is interested in various forms of musical expression, its terrains of creation range from purely acousmatic music to improvised instrumental music, from contemporary classical music to "popular" electronic music.

Working with various artists and musicians in different formations or projects, he amuses himself by confronting these "other worlds" to enrich his own personal work.

He has also composed music for contemporary dance for more than two years, working alongside choreographers Roberto Oliván, Fatou Traoré, Katja F. M. Wolf, among others.

He also works with "Antivj," a collective of creation/installation/ audiovisual performance based on "video mapping projection."

In 2006, he was awarded the Young Composer 1st Prize at TIME (International Rostrum of Electroacoustic

Figure 7. Loup Mormont.



Music of UNESCO), Lisbon, for the exhibit *palimpsest on memories*.

In 2008, he was awarded the 1st Prize of the Spatialization Performance of Acousmatic Music at *L'espace du son* in Brussels.

7. *Belle Inconnue*—Loup Mormont

This piece was composed as part of the composition classes directed by Annette Vande Gorne. A sweet ballad meandering between the joy of horizontality and the pleasure of articulations, the piece may also be understood as a work on tones, textures, and on the processes of unfolding that reveal them. We may also notice a penchant for harmonic naivete as well as an inclination for impurity. It was awarded the Limerick Diffusion Prize in 2010.

Loup Mormont settled in Brussels in 1999, where he discovered experimental and electroacoustic music. He attended the Royal Conservatory of Mons where he completed his Master's degree in acousmatic composition with Annette Vande Gorne. Loup Mormont has written pieces for singers, dancers, and filmmakers. Presently, he is also Lecturer at the Royal Conservatory of Mons.

Figure 8. Rafael Muñoz.



8. *Invitation à prendre le temps*—Rafael Muñoz

Based on a repetitive pattern, constantly evolving during the piece, *Invitation à prendre le temps* [Invitation To Take Time] (2011) gives you the opportunity to listen to the fullness of time and to savor its slowness.

Fascinated by electronic music for years, **Rafael Muñoz** (Brussels) has been playing as a DJ in Brussels since 2004. This passion for music, especially for the minimal techno movement, led him to the Royal Conservatory of Mons (Belgium) in the acousmatic composition class of Annette Vande Gorne. Rafael is keen on repetitive music, rhythm, sound features, and the study in minute detail of it. Nowadays, he tries to base his work on a mix of all these elements.

9. *A Pianistic Adventure*—Jean-Louis Poliart

After asking a five-year-old novice pianist to improvise at the piano without any guidance from me, I realized that she had actually made a "play-sequence" (one of the first exercises students do in electroacoustic composition courses), with evident pleasure. This play-sequence was

Figure 9. Jean-Louis Poliart.



particularly successful in terms of form, rhythmic patterns, and energy. In fact, the young pianist imitated, in a very personal way, the gestures and movements of a professional pianist in concert. It was a particularly beautiful and magnificent adventure.

I recorded this improvisation, and it became the pretext for a project that I amplified through electroacoustic composition. Another narration was constructed—an intimate adventure, strictly private—that was a mirror to the first one. In the second narration, the sound material of the piano improvisation was transformed extensively in light of extra-musical facts tied to personal experience, notably the theme of adventure (already present in the experiment realized by the young student).

A Pianistic Adventure (2011) was composed with the help of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, Directorate of Culture, Department of Music.

Jean-Louis Poliart completed traditional musical studies in the classes

of piano and composition at the Royal Conservatory of Mons (Belgium). In 1996, he obtained there a graduate diploma in electroacoustic composition in the class of Annette Vande Gorne. Professor of harmony in this institution until 2008, he was also

the director of the academy of music "La Chantrerie" of Soignies. He created a course of electroacoustic composition there in 1994 (a first in Belgium on the level of the music academies), a course of carillon, and a musical workshop for people with

special needs. His production ranges from electroacoustic to instrumental music along with audio arts and music for theatre. He is a member of several associations of composers and/or electroacoustics and is the holder of diverse awards.