



Specials > FONS ÀUDIO

The *Specials* podcasts focus on projects by artists and curators who have some kind of connection to the Museum's programming and the MACBA Collection. Conceived as an audiovisual project, FONS is a documentary series in which artists from the MACBA Collection talk about their work. This series also includes a specific montage devised for radio, entitled FONS ÀUDIO, created from conversations with the artists.

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Produced by Roc Jiménez de Cisneros. Interview and documentation: Roc Jiménez de Cisneros.

# FONS ÀUDIO #14

## Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny

The work of the Catalan composer Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny is an interesting example of an effort to break traditional moulds through an aesthetic and methodological approach, which places him at the vanguard of new music in Europe during the second half of the twentieth century. In FONS AUDIO #14, Mestres Quadreny analyses his motives and techniques with reference to various works in the MACBA collection and within his own music.

### 01. Summary

In Europe and the USA, the end of the Second World War represented a point of reflection within ideas and art. The rupture that the avant-garde had initiated at the beginning of the twentieth century, became even more urgent: the desire to truly break with half a decade of destruction and look for new languages in art, performance, poetry, architecture and music. Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny (Manresa, 1929) is a paradigmatic example of the spirit of radical renovation that swept the European continent during the fifties. His closeness to key figures of Catalan art, like Brossa, Tàpies, Miró, Prats and Villèlia was indicative of his interest in the transversal nature of a creativity which clearly transcended the limits of normality.

Coming from a technical-scientific background, Mestres was notable for his search for alternative methodologies, compositional systems and aesthetic standpoints that left behind the dodecaphonic structures and serialism that had dominated the mid-twentieth century, to integrate new ideas influenced by mathematics, physics and statistics to his music. As opposed to König and Xenakis, for example, Mestres's approximation of randomness and natural phenomena governed by chance is closer to areas explored by Miró than those reflected in pure stochasticism. In his book *Pensar i fer música*, Mestres tells an interesting story in relation to Miró and the nature of chance:

"One day, when contemplating one of his lithographs, I noticed a group of stains that looked like they had been randomly thrown from a brush. The composition produced an unusually vibrant sensation within me. Looking closer, I saw that they had been painted one by one. That is, the artist had recreated the appearance of chance artificially. An idea I found highly suggestive and which I translated to music by imitating chance phenomena through chance procedures, and later modifying the appearance, while maintaining the structure."

Almost as a declaration of principles, Mestres adds: "The closer music moves to an expression directed towards the consciousness where a mechanism of aesthetic emotions resides, the more I feel the need to leave aside this visceral component due to its essential redundancy." The meticulous recreation of random processes that Mestres defends synthesizes his attitude to art, which takes its inspiration as much from scientific as from humanist baggage. An approach full of dualism in which the acid vision of Brossa is mixed with a search for new compositional tools and a consideration of the legacy of Gerhard, through numerous vocal, orchestral, electro-acoustic, chamber, performance and visual pieces.

In the interview, Mestres Quadreny begins with various works from the MACBA Collection and their corresponding scores to reconstruct fragments of their artistic context over the decades and their connections with other creators.



[Bartomeu Mari and Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny introducing the Brossa archive to the press, 2012]

## 02. Works by Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny in the MACBA Collection

*Homenatge a Schumann*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4358-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4358-)

*Invençions mòbils, 1961*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4359-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4359-)

*Quartet de catroc, 1962*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-quartet-de-catroc](http://www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-quartet-de-catroc)

*Suite bufa, 1966*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4093-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4093-)

*Tres cànons en homenatge a Galileu, 1966*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-tres-canons](http://www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-tres-canons)

*Tres peces per a violoncel i piano, 1968*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4095-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4095-)

*Quadre, 1969*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4096-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4096-)

*Doble concert per a ones martenot, 1970*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/ca/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-doble-concert-](http://www.macba.cat/ca/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-doble-concert-)

*Variacions essencials, 1970*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/xavier-basiana-variacions-essencials](http://www.macba.cat/es/xavier-basiana-variacions-essencials)

*Aronada, 1971*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/quadreny-aronada](http://www.macba.cat/es/quadreny-aronada)

*Preludi, 1971*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4101-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4101-)

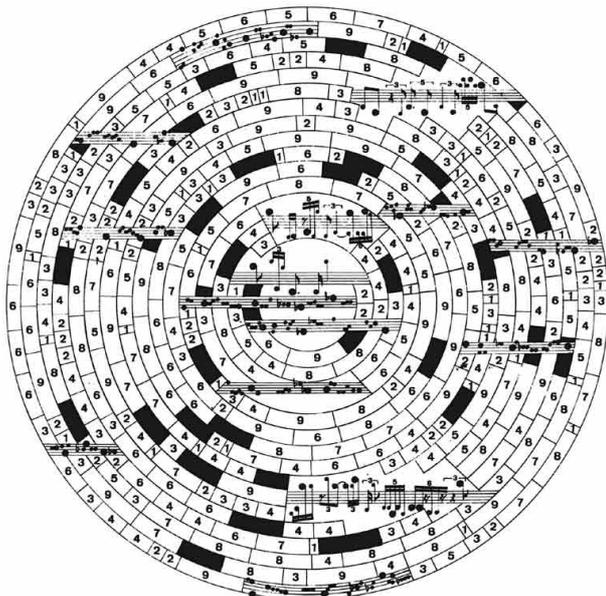
*Homenatge a Joan Prats, 1972*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4102-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4102-)

*Self-service, 1973*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4113-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4113-)

*L'Estro Aleatorio, 1973 - 1978*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/xavier-basiana-estro-aleatorio](http://www.macba.cat/es/xavier-basiana-estro-aleatorio)

*Tocatina, 1975*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-tocatina](http://www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-tocatina)

*Homenatge a Robert Gerhard, 1976*  
MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-homenatge](http://www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-homenatge)



[Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny *Aronada*, 1971]

*Espai sonor V*, 1976

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4105-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4105-)

*Molèstia*, 1977

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4106-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4106-)

*Antíodes*, 1982

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4108-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4108-)

*Canvièra*, 1982

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/4109-](http://www.macba.cat/es/4109-)

*Suite Bechtold*, 1994

MACBA Collection. MACBA Consortium  
[www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-suite-bechtold](http://www.macba.cat/es/josep-maria-mestres-quadreny-suite-bechtold)

### 03. Related links

AVANT #5. Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny. Part I. A monographic on the work and historical context of Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny, featuring interviews with Carles Santos and Oriol Pérez.

[rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant\\_josep\\_maria\\_mestres\\_quadreny\\_1\\_1\\_en/capsula](http://rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_josep_maria_mestres_quadreny_1_1_en/capsula)

AVANT #5. Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny. Part II. A musical selection of Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny works from 1962 until today.

[rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant\\_josep\\_maria\\_mestres\\_quadreny\\_1\\_2\\_en/capsula](http://rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_josep_maria_mestres_quadreny_1_2_en/capsula)

Biography and works list

[www.lamadeguido.com/mestres.html](http://www.lamadeguido.com/mestres.html)

Text on *Aronada*

[marcusegea.blogspot.com/2010/09/josep-m-mestres-quadreny-aronada.html](http://marcusegea.blogspot.com/2010/09/josep-m-mestres-quadreny-aronada.html)

Score for *L'Estro Aleatorio*

[www.lamadeguido.com/scores/mg108-0.pdf](http://www.lamadeguido.com/scores/mg108-0.pdf)

Dissertation by Helena Martín about the musical actions conducted by Mestres Quadreny and Brossa at La Ricarda (1963-1966)

[upcommons.upc.edu/pfc/bitstream/2099.1/13443/1/Helena%20Martin%20Nieva\\_TESINA.pdf](http://upcommons.upc.edu/pfc/bitstream/2099.1/13443/1/Helena%20Martin%20Nieva_TESINA.pdf)

### 04. Credits

Produced by Roc Jiménez de Cisneros. Voice: Lucrecia Dalt and Roc Jiménez de Cisneros. Documentation and interview: Roc Jiménez de Cisneros.

### 05. Licence

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