



Research > AVANT

Sound art and experimental music arrived to Spain relatively late, but over the course of the last three decades they have produced names, scenes and works that have managed to establish themselves with certain authority on the international stage.

From the most academic electroacoustics to industrial music, from radiophonic art to post-no-wave improvisation, AVANT has joined together with some of the most important performers of experimental music in Spain to retrace some of the key moments of the country's musical avant-garde, scarcely documented until now.

Each AVANT focuses on the work and career of a group project from the scene, documented and composed of two parts: the first part reconstructs the artist's context through interviews, and the second part retraces the artist's work with musical examples.

As part of the research process for the podcast series AVANT, we unearth the conclusions document that was drafted by the curator of the series, Roc Jiménez de Cisneros. We also revisit the musical selection of his personal favourites, originally published on Twitter.

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Roc Jiménez de Cisneros (Barcelona, 1975) is an artist. In 1996 he founded the computer music group EVOL, an aesthetic exploration of algorithmic composition and a deconstruction of rave culture. His music has been published on record labels like Entr'acte, Mego, Presto!?, fals.ch or ALKU, the imprint he started in 1997 with Anna Ramos. Halfway between academia and psychedelia, his work has been presented live in festivals, clubs, galleries and museums throughout the world. vivapunani.org

AVANT

01. Conclusions

Most dictatorial regimes involuntarily and almost inevitably generate oppositional cultural movements. But regardless of their political and/or philosophical importance, these rebellions (which are often born in the subcultural shadows) are not necessarily turning points in the artistic sense. The enormous communicative capacity of music – which can reach large numbers of people more quickly and with less effort than literature, for example – leads many of these cultural resistance movements to choose to politically instrumentalise their musical discourse, reducing it to little more than bare proclamations, stripped of any aesthetic and formal artifice. The generation of singer-songwriters that confronted Franco's regime in Spain from the sixties onwards did so with messages that were hard-hitting and provocative for the time, expressed through pop music styles that were already well established in countries such as France, England and the United States. This predominance of the message made it even more difficult for alternative musical discourses to exist in a cultural context (Francoism) in which experimentation and rupture were obviously far from widespread ideas. For several generations, even after the regime had ended, risk and transgression in music were almost exclusively linked to political ideas (lyrics) rather than radical approaches to structure, time, tonality or the idea of authorship itself, to mention a few of the fundamental concepts that Western music has repeatedly challenged since the emergence of serialism in Europe and the United States in the early twenties.

Even today, the Spanish mainstream media still recount the history of pop music from the sixties to the eighties in terms of the work, messages and actions of singer-songwriters and poets: proxies for the political figures silenced by the regime. Official history has systematically ignored the existence of a series of individuals who waged a very different battle during those same years, but in other spheres. Theirs was a less explicit resistance, which was often as committed to form as to the underlying message, and which tried to redress the situation that many described as a 'desert' through the solo and communal efforts of artists who were isolated both geographically and by the lack of context, support and history.

AVANT is a portrait of twelve figures who would appear to be unrelated but are strangely linked by their shared context, by the seemingly invisible networks that emerged in this fragmented period in history. It is not a history of anti-Franco resistance or of the Transition to democracy, even though many of its protagonists structured their compositions around the problems arising from these social and political contexts. AVANT is a jigsaw puzzle of the country's other musical reality. It helps to explain how these and many other individuals lay the foundations for a new ideal of contemporaneity in Spanish-made music, which has taken many different forms over the past forty years in the slow road to normalisation.

Roc Jiménez de Cisneros, Summer 2010

02. Selection of Roc Jiménez de Cisneros' favourites

Esplendor Geométrico, 'Necrosis en la Poya', 1981
 Francisco López, 'La Selva', 1998
 Música Electrónica Libre, 'IT Viage', 1976
 Vagina Dentata Organ, 'Un Chien Catalan', 1994
 Macromassa, 'Darlia Microtónica', 1978

This musical selection is available for download here:
rwm.macba.cat/uploads/avant/post-avant-seleccion.mp3



03. Related links

Complete series

rwm.macba.cat/es/avant_tag

Roc Jiménez de Cisneros' personal favourites

rwm.macba.cat/uploads/avant/post-avant-seleccion.mp3

AVANT #1. Esplendor Geométrico. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_esplendor_geometrico_1_1_en/capsula

AVANT #1. Esplendor Geométrico. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_esplendor_geometrico_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #2. Llorenç Barber. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_lloren_barber_1_1_ca/capsula

AVANT #2. Llorenç Barber. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_lloren_barber_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #3. Francisco López. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_francisco_lopez_1_1_en/capsula

AVANT #3. Francisco López. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_francisco_lopez_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #4. José Manuel Berenguer. Part I

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AVANT #4. José Manuel Berenguer. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_jose_manuel_berenguer_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #5. Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_josep_maria_mestres_quadreny_1_1_en/capsula

AVANT #5. Josep Maria Mestres Quadreny. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_josep_maria_mestres_quadreny_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #6. Eduardo Polonio. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_eduardo_polonio_1_1_en/capsula

AVANT #6. Eduardo Polonio. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_eduardo_polonio_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #7. José Iges. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_jose_iges_1_1_es/capsula

AVANT #7. José Iges. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_jose_iges_1_2_en/capsula

AVANT #8. Vagina Dentata Organ. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_vagina_dentata_organ_1_1_en/capsula

AVANT #8. Vagina Dentata Organ. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_vagina_dentata_organ_1_2_ca/capsula

AVANT #9. Victor Nubla. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_victor_nubla_1_1_en/capsula

AVANT #9. Victor Nubla. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_victor_nubla_1_2/capsula



AVANT #10. Pelayo Fernández Arrizabalaga. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_pelayo_arrizabalaga_1_1/capsula

AVANT #10. Pelayo Fernández Arrizabalaga. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_pelayo/capsula

AVANT #11. Juan Hidalgo. Part I

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AVANT #11. Juan Hidalgo. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_juan_hidalgo_1_2/capsula

AVANT #12. Carles Santos. Part I

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_carles_santos_1_1/capsula

AVANT #12. Carles Santos. Part II

rwm.macba.cat/en/research/avant_carles_santos_1_2/capsula

04. Acknowledgements

AVANT wishes to thank all the artists that have taken part in this series.

05. Copyright note

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