With this section, RWM continues a line of programmes devoted to exploring the complex map of sound art from different points of view organised in curatorial series.

Curated by Chris Cutler, PROBES takes Marshall McLuhan's conceptual contrapositions as a starting point to analyse and expose the search for a new sonic language made urgent after the collapse of tonality in the twentieth century. The series looks at the many probes and experiments that were launched in the last century in search of new musical resources, and a new aesthetic; for ways to make music adequate to a world transformed by disorientating technologies.

Curated by Chris Cutler

At the start of the seventies, Chris Cutler co-founded The Ottawa Music Company – a 22-piece Rock composer's orchestra – before joining British experimental group Henry Cow, with whom he toured, recorded and worked in dance and theatre projects for the next eight years. Subsequently he co-founded a series of mixed national groups: Art Bears, News from Babel, Cassiber, The (ec) Nudes, p53 and The Science Group, and was a permanent member of American bands Pere Ubu, Hail and The Wooden Birds. Outside a succession of special projects for stage, theatre, film and radio he still works consistently in successive projects with Fred Frith, Zeena Parkins, Jon Rose, Tim Hodgkinson, David Thomas, Peter Blegvad, Daan Vandewalle, Ikue Mori, Lotte Anker, Stevan Tickmayer, Annie Gosfield and spectralists Iancu Dumitrescu and Ana Maria Avram. He is a permanent member of The Bad Boys (Cage, Stockhausen, Fluxus &c.) The Artaud Beats and The Artbears Songbook, and turns up with the usual suspects in all the usual improvising contexts. As a soloist he has toured the world with his extended, electrified, kit.

Adjacent projects include commissioned works for radio, various live movie soundtracks, *Signe de Trois* for surround-sound projection, the daily year-long soundscape series *Out of the Blue Radio* for Resonance FM, and p53 for Orchestra and Soloists.

He also founded and runs the independent label ReR Megacorp and the art distribution service Gallery and Academic and is author of the theoretical collection File Under Popular – as well as of numerous articles and papers published in 16 languages. www.ccutler.com/ccutler

PROBES #4

This fourth programme looks at another dimension of portamenti, and moves on into early twentieth century ideas of colour, timbre and the contested territory of noise.

01. Summary

In the late nineteenth century two facts conspired to change the face of music: the collapse of common practice tonality (which overturned the certainties underpinning the world of art music), and the invention of a revolutionary new form of memory, sound recording (which redefined and greatly empowered the world of popular music). A tidal wave of probes and experiments into new musical resources and new organisational practices ploughed through both disciplines, bringing parts of each onto shared terrain before rolling on to underpin a new aesthetics able to follow sound and its manipulations beyond the narrow confines of 'music'. This series tries analytically to trace and explain these developments, and to show how, and why, both musical and post-musical genres take the forms they do. This fourth programme concludes our excursion into portamenti, looking at its use in popular music, before moving on to wholly unpitched probes that begin to map the many aspects of differentiated noise.

02. Playlist

01 Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978
02 Risset-Shepard, 'Sample', 1968
03 Jean-Claude Risset, 'Computer Suite for Little Boy' (excerpt), 1968
04 Sol Hoopii, 'St Louis Blues', 1927
05 Hawaiian lap steel, source and date unidentified
06 Blind Willie Johnson, 'Dark Was the Night', 1927
07 One String Sam, 'I need $100', 1956
08 Unidentified lap steel track, source and date unknown
09 Lloyd Green, 'Farewell Party', live at the International Steel Guitar Convention, 1992
10 Mike Perlowin, 'Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune' (composed by Debussy in 1894), 2005
11 Susan Alcorn, 'Sintra' (excerpt), 2012
12 Elmore James, 'The Sky Is Crying' (excerpt), 1959
13 George Harrison, 'Marwa Blues', 2002
14 Pink Floyd, 'Interstellar Overdrive', 1967
15 Gong, 'Fohat Digs Holes in Space' (excerpt), 1971
16 Luigi Russolo, 'Intonarumori', example 1, 1913 (mechanical reconstruction from 1977)
17 Luigi Russolo, 'Intonarumori', example 2, 1913 (mechanical reconstruction from 1977)
18 Luigi Russolo, 'Ululatore', 1913 (mechanical reconstruction from 1977)
19 Antonio Russolo, 'Serenata' (opening bars), 1926
20 Luigi Russolo, 'Awakening of a City', 1913 (1977 reconstruction)
22 Karlheinz Stockhausen, 'Helikopter-Streichquartett', 1992-3
23 Johann Sebastian Bach, 'Partitas' (excerpt), ca. 1725-30
24 Vivaldi, 'Winter', 1723, for strings
25 Vivaldi, 'Winter', 1726, for koto ensemble
26 Vivaldi, 'Winter', date unknown, for unidentified rock band
27 Igor Stravinsky, 'The Rite of Spring' (opening for orchestra), 1912
28 Igor Stravinsky, 'The Rite of Spring' (opening for electric guitars), unknown origin
29 Arnold Schönberg, 'Five Pieces for Orchestra. Op. 16. No. 3', 1909
30 Anton Webern, 'Five pieces for Orchestra', piano reduction (internet site, no details given)

[Edgard Varèse, left, composer of electronic music, with Hanno Koegel, engineer]

03. Selected links

John Oswald's websites
www.pfony.com
www.plunderphonics.com

Karlheinz Stockhausen's website
www.stockhausen.org

Pedal Steel Music
pedalsteelmusic.com

Susan Alacorn's website
www.susanalcorn.net

Mike Perlowin's website
www.mikeperlowin.com

Futurist manifesto: Luigi Russolo, *The Art of Noise*, translated by Robert Filliou
www.artype.de/Sammlung/pdf/russolo_noise.pdf?

Thereminvox
www.thereminvox.com

04. Notes

On length and edits.
The purpose of these programmes is to give some practical impression of the probes we discuss. This necessitates for the most part extracting short stretches of music from longer wholes, which, of course, compromises the integrity and disrupts the context inherent in the original works. I have also, on occasion, edited different sections of a longer work together, better to illustrate the points under discussion. So the examples played in the programmes should not be confused with the works themselves. Wherever the word 'excerpt' appears after a title in the programme transcript, this indicates that what follows is an illustration, not a composition as it was conceived or intended. If something catches your ear, please do go back to the source.

Notification
If you want to be notified when a new probe goes up, please mail rermegacorp@dial.pipex.com with subject: Probe Me.

05. Credits

Curated and produced by Chris Cutler. Engineered and mastered by Bob Drake at Studio Midi-Pyrenees, Caudeval, France. Recorded with Studio Projects C1 microphone, home-made mic preamp built by EM Thomas, designed by Yasushi Utsunomia and a home-made compressor by EM Thomas. Edited with a PC and Samplitude Pro version 12.

06. Acknowledgments

With thanks to Susan Alcorn, Mike Perlowin, William Sharp, Charles O'Meara, Henry Kaiser, Udi Koomran, Rene Lussier and Simon Emmerson.

07. Copyright note