



Curatorial > PROBES

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

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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 #5

This fifth programme sets the scene for a wide range of very different approaches to the exploration of timbre and looks at ways of modifying or preparing the traditional piano.

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 fifth episode looks at timbre and the many routes to its extension, and then explores the somewhat exotic range of modifications, preparations and ways of subverting pianos that have been tried to date.

02. Playlist

- 01 Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978
- 02 Iannis Xenakis, 'Dämmerchein' (excerpt), 1994
- 03 John Cage, 'The Perilous Night, part IV' (excerpt), 1943-44
- 04 Sylvia Hallett, 'Untitled' (excerpt), 1983
- 05 Roberto Musci & Giovanni Venosta, 'Empty Boulevard' (excerpt), 1987
- 06 Jacques Lasry, François and Bernard Baschet, 'Danse du Cristal No. 2' (instrumental, excerpt), 1968
- 07 Jean Hervé-Peron, 'Poem for Concrete Mixer', 2011
- 08 Karlheinz Stockhausen, 'Mikrophonie 2' (excerpt), 1965
- 09 Blind Willie Johnson, 'John the Revelator' (excerpt), 1930
- 10 Scott Crothers, 'Quarter-tone Piano Prelude #8', 2009
- 11 Johann Nepomuk Hummel, 'Recollections of Paganini' (excerpt), 1831
- 12 H Messemaeckers, 'March de la Belle Alliance' (excerpt) played by Luc Devos on a pianoforte built in late 1820s by Joseph Angsti
- 13 Erik Satie, 'Le piège de Méduse' (excerpt), 1913, performed by Matteo Ramon Arealos, 2012
- 14 Cimbalom, GF Handel Praeludium, sample from the reconstructed Lutheal in the Musical Instruments Museum (MIM), Brussels
- 15 Clavecin, GF Handel Praeludium, sample from the reconstructed Lutheal in the Musical Instruments Museum (MIM), Brussels
- 16 Harp Tiree, GF Handel Praeludium, sample from the reconstructed Lutheal in the Musical Instruments Museum (MIM), Brussels
- 17 Maurice Ravel, 'Tzigane' (excerpt), 1924. Played by Sebastian Knauer (luth), Daniel Hope (violin)
- 18 Choralcelo: this abbreviated melody line of 'Poor Little Butterfly' is extracted from a badly scratched original 78 glass master recorded in 1942 by Regene Farrington, wife of Wilber Farrington, President of The Choralcelo Company
- 19 Russ Conway, 'Snow Coach' (excerpt), 1959
- 20 The Beatles, 'Penny Lane' (excerpt), 1967
- 22 John Sebastian Bach, 'Brandenburg No. 5' (excerpt), 1719, played by Glenn Gould
- 23 Henry Cowell, 'Sinister Resonance' (excerpt), 1930
- 24 John Cage, 'And the Earth Shall Bear Again' (excerpt), 1942
- 25 John Cage, 'Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano. Sonata No. 9' (excerpt), 1946-8



[Choralcelo Company Stock, 1917]

- 26 Henry Cow, 'Concerts' (excerpt), 1976
- 27 Denman Maroney, 'Untitled' (excerpt), 2008
- 28 Erdem Helvacioğlu, 'Blood Drops by the Pool' (excerpt), 2012
- 29 Anthony Pateras, 'Descent' (excerpt), 2007
- 30 Zygmunt Krauze, 'Stone Music' (excerpt), 1973
- 31 Marla Hlady, 'Playing Piano' (excerpt), 2006-2008
- 32 Horatiu Radulescu, 'Clepsydra' (excerpt), 1982
- 33 Ferrante & Teicher, 'S Wonderful' (excerpt), 1956
- 34 Ferrante & Teicher, 'El Cumbanchero' (excerpt), 1956
- 35 Ferrante & Teicher, 'Mississippi Boogie', 1952
- 36 Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978

03. Selected links

Baschet Brothers

francois.baschet.free.fr/front.htm

John Cage

johncage.org

Choralcelo

symposium.music.org/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=1925:the-choralcelo-one-uniquely-american-instrument&Itemid=124

Henry Cowell

www.henrycowell.org/hc/default.cfm

Marla Hlady

www.marlahlady.com/Main.html

www.youtube.com/watch?v=PnJrB3raSSE

Zygmunt Krauze

www.zygmuntkrauze.com

Denman Maroney

www.denmanmaroney.com/Hyper.html

Musical Instrument Museum, Brussels

<http://www.mim.be/en>

Horatiu Radelescu

www.horatiuradulescu.com

Karlheinz Stockhausen

www.stockhausen.org

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 remmegacorp@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

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