



## 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](http://www.ccutler.com/ccutler)

# PROBES #6

There's no end of things that have been laid on, tied to, screwed into or otherwise attached to alter the sound of conventional instruments. This sixth programme draws a map and explores some of the outer reaches of string and wind preparations.

## 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 sixth programme continues to explore probes into pitch through the preparation and modification of conventional instruments – looking at the many tapings, wrappings, clampings, clippings, attachments and impairments applied across the family of strings, before moving on to the less familiar territory of prepared winds. Some people get up to some pretty strange behaviour in the pursuit of unusual sounds.

## 02. Playlist

- 01 Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978
- 02 Anne LeBaron, 'Blue Harp Study No. 1', 1992
- 03 Joanna Newsom, 'Untitled' (excerpt), 2004, introductory voice: Irwin Chusid
- 04 Anne LeBaron, 'Blue Harp Study No. 2' (excerpt), 1992
- 05 Bart Hopkin, 'Untitled', 2011
- 06 Bart Hopkin, 'Untitled', 2011
- 07 Bart Hopkin, 'Untitled', 2011
- 08 Janet Feder, 'I Hear Voices' (excerpt), 2004
- 09 Matthew Elgart and Peter Yates, 'Snack Shop' (excerpt), 1981
- 10 Bart Hopkin, 'Untitled', 2011
- 11 Hans Reichel, 'Death of the Rare Bird Ymir' (excerpt), 1979
- 12 Hans Reichel, 'Two Small Pieces Announced by a Cigar Box' (excerpt), 1981
- 13 Keith Rowe, unidentified live recording (excerpt), recent but date unknown
- 14 Rain in the Face, 'Cloud Studies No. 2' (excerpt), 1973
- 15 Henry Cow, 'Beginning: the Long March' (excerpt), in *Praise of Learning*, 1974
- 16 Jon Rose, 'Untitled', 2013
- 17 Sri Partha Bose, 'Untitled' (excerpt), 2012
- 18 Thomas Roth, 'Nyckelharpa', 2009
- 19 Joseph Haydn, 'Trio No. 107' (excerpt), 1757-60
- 20 Georg Friedrich Haas, 'Solo for Viola d'Amore' (excerpt), 2000
- 22 Paolo Angeli, 'Senza parole' (excerpt), 2013
- 23 Eugene Chadbourne, 'Pop Plays Pops' (excerpt), live performance, date unknown
- 24 Antonio Vivaldi, Concerto for Muted Violin 'Il Riposo' (excerpt), date unknown
- 25 Stoll, Flynn & Company, The 'Jazzmania Quintett', 'I Ain't got Nobody', 1928
- 26 Stoll, Flynn & Company, The 'Jazzmania Quintett', 'I Ain't got Nobody', 1928
- 27 Mauricio Kagel, '1898' (excerpt), 1972-3
- 28 Harry Partch, 'By the Rivers of Babylon', (excerpt), 1931
- 29 Harry Partch, 'The Adapted Guitar', 1934
- 30 Jon Rose, 'Spike and Spaghetti Machine' (excerpt), 2000



[Hans Reichel during the Free Music Festival XXII in Antwerp, 1995. © Raymond Mallentjer]

- 31 Brae Grimes, 'Wanderment', for prepared trumpet, date unknown
- 32 Michael Vogt and Bob Drake, 'Assembly', 2013
- 33 Jonathan Harnum, mute demo, Harmon mute with stem, date unknown
- 34 Jonathan Harnum, mute demo, Harmon mute with stem, date unknown
- 35 Duke Ellington, 'Concerto for Cootie' (excerpt), 1973
- 36 Duke Ellington, 'It don't mean a thing a thing' (excerpt), 1931
- 37 Manuel De Falla, 'Will 'O the Wisp' (excerpt), 1915-1925, arranged by Gil Evans, 1959
- 38 Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978

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### 03. Selected links

Janet Feder's website  
[www.janetfeder.com](http://www.janetfeder.com)

David Toop's website  
[davidtoopblog.com](http://davidtoopblog.com)

Fred Frith's website  
[www.fredfrith.com](http://www.fredfrith.com)

Jon Rose's website  
[www.jonroseweb.com](http://www.jonroseweb.com)

Paolo Angeli's website  
[www.paoloangeli.it](http://www.paoloangeli.it)

Eugene Chadbourne's website  
[eugenechadbourne.com](http://eugenechadbourne.com)

Mauricio Kagel's biography in his website  
[www.mauricio-kagel.com/gb/biografy.html](http://www.mauricio-kagel.com/gb/biografy.html)

Harry Partch's website  
[www.harrypartch.com](http://www.harrypartch.com)

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### 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 [remegacorp@dial.pipex.com](mailto:remegacorp@dial.pipex.com) with subject: Probe Me.

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### 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.



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## 06. Acknowledgments

With thanks to Tim Hodgkinson, Michael Vogt, Jon Rose, Bob Drake, David Toop, Janet Feder, Davey Williams, Alex Kolkowsy, Bart Hopkins, Anne Le Baron, Helene Breschand, Paolo Angeli, Anne Le Baron, Eugene Chadbourne, Irwin Chusid, Janet Feder, Steven Gilmore, Lutz Glandien, Brae Grimes, Garth Knox, Bart Hopkin, Chuck O'meara, David Petts, Keith Rowe, Bill Sharp, Ryan Teague, David Toop and Lutz Glandien

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