

Electronic Music Studios

PROGRAM THREE

Music Realized at The Institute of Sonology

Tuesday, November 23, 1976, 8:00 P.M.

Clapp Recital Hall

The history of electro-acoustic music in the Netherlands began in 1956, when Philips set up the studio in Eindhoven in which Edgar Varese was to compose his famous "Poeme electronique". Subsequently several studios were founded, notably in Delft, Bilthoven, and at the University of Utrecht (1960). This last studio, recently renamed the Institute of Sonology, carries out research work apart from compositional activities proper, and also does much teaching. The University of Utrecht is therefore an international magnet not only for dedicated composers, but also for students who come to be initiated into studio techniques and the more recent techniques of composition by computer.

1. Funktion Grau (1969)

Gottfried Michael Koenig

G.M.KOENIG was born in Brunswick, Germany in 1926. He studied music in Brunswick, Detmold and Cologne, the construction and programming of electronic data processing equipment in Bonn. From 1958 to 1964 he worked at the Cologne Musik-hochschule, first as assistant in a class for music for radio plays, later teaching composition and analysis. From 1954 to 1964 he worked at the Studio for Electronic Music at West-German Radio, and since 1964 he has been artistic director of the Studio for Electronic Music at Utrecht University. He has written radio broadcasts and essays on musical theory, given courses on electronic music and lectured in Europe and the United States. His present interest is chiefly in programming compositional rules and in automating the production process in the electronic studio. Besides electronic compositions (Klangfiguren, Essay, Terminus, Funktionen), he has also written instrumental music for small and large ensembles.

FUNKTION GRAU is one of a series of works entitled Functions, the prime objective of which was to investigate the influence of chance on the musical form. For this purpose, control signals for several acoustic parameters were recorded on tape by means of frequency modulation, later to be played back by means of frequency demodulation and fed to controllable equipment. Chance was given two opportunities to exert its influence: first, during the production of the control signals by the use of noise signals; secondly, during the formation of the work by the use of computer programs.

For each sound, the composer had to state which control signals should be used for the sound production, the duration

The history of electro-acoustic music in the Netherlands began in 1956, when Philips set up the studio in Eindhoven in which Edgar Varese was to compose his famous "Poeme electronique". Subsequently several studios were founded, notably in Delft, Bilthoven, and at the University of Utrecht (1960). This last studio, recently renamed the Institute of Sonology, carries out research work apart from compositional activities proper, and also does much teaching. The University of Utrecht is therefore an international magnet not only for dedicated composers, but also for students who come to be initiated into studio techniques and the more recent techniques of composition by computer.

1. Funktion Grau (1969)

Gottfried Michael Koenig

G.M.KOENIG was born in Brunswick, Germany in 1926. He studied music in Brunswick, Detmold and Cologne, the construction and programming of electronic data processing equipment in Bonn. From 1958 to 1964 he worked at the Cologne Musik-hochschule, first as assistant in a class for music for radio plays, later teaching composition and analysis. From 1954 to 1964 he worked at the Studio for Electronic Music at West-German Radio, and since 1964 he has been artistic director of the Studio for Electronic Music at Utrecht University. He has written radio broadcasts and essays on musical theory, given courses on electronic music and lectured in Europe and the United States. His present interest is chiefly in programming compositional rules and in automating the production process in the electronic studio. Besides electronic compositions (Klangfiguren, Essay, Terminus, Funktionen), he has also written instrumental music for small and large ensembles.

FUNKTION GRAU is one of a series of works entitled Functions, the prime objective of which was to investigate the influence of chance on the musical form. For this purpose, control signals for several acoustic parameters were recorded on tape by means of frequency modulation, later to be played back by means of frequency demodulation and fed to controllable equipment. Chance was given two opportunities to exert its influence: first, during the production of the control signals by the use of noise signals; secondly, during the formation of the work by the use of computer programs.

For each sound, the composer had to state which control signals should be used for the sound production, the duration of the sound, and lastly its position in the time-flow of the composition. The fact that control signals were stored on tape can be regarded as a makeshift solution corresponding to the available technical facilities. The control signals could in fact have been produced by means of the computer since only one signal form was used for both the spectral formation of the basic sounds and their transformation, this signal form then being reproduced at various speeds.

The influence of chance on the formation of the work permits a large number of variants to be formed under identical conditions. The question was: to what extent could these variants be distinguished from one another by a listener hearing

the work for the first time? There was, however, not enough time to produce a large number of variants, and so variants were formed according to the preliminary structure of the overall form. In the simplest case each sound only occurred once in the composition, in other cases more frequently, in one form-section more often than in another, so that form-sections with their own particular characteristics resulted. It turned out that unprejudiced listeners definitely did not hear a clearer articulation when the composer had already made sure that the articulation would be clearer, and that where each sound only occurred once, its position being determined by chance, form-orientation was easy.

Duration: 10:15

2. Enchantement (1972)

Luctor Ponse

L.PONSE was born in Geneva and received his early musical training at the Valenciennes Conservatory, winning in 1930 the "Prix d'Excellence" for theory and solfeggio and in 1932 the same prize for piano. He returned to Geneva in 1933 to complete his studies, and was awarded the "Prix de Virtuosite" in 1935, under Prof. Johnny Aubert. In 1936 he won the Concours Internationale de Composition Henri le Boeuf -- "Jeunesse 1936" -- in Brussels; he has also won the second prize at the Luxembourg Concours Internationale de Composition in 1952. He settled in Amsterdam in 1936, and has since performed as soloist, chamber musician and accompanist. He has had radio engagements at Suisse Romande, NIR-Brussels, BBC, French and Dutch broadcasting stations. He attended the 1965/65 course in electronic music at Bilthoven, Holland, which was directed by G.M.Koenig.

Voltage control is the technical motive of ENCHANTEMENT. The point of departure is a series of 12 sounds which in the 4 dodecaphonic transformations result in 48 pitches of different sounds, and a poem by J.H.W.Veenstra which supplies the intensity and rhythm. A variable function generator, controlled by the words of the poem, activates a sinewave generator in 53 steps (48 steps for the sounds and 5 steps to separate the different serial forms) and a modulator for the dynamics.

The exclusive choice of sinusoidal sounds is a musical one. Although this piece is autonomous, it will be the first part of a work in which the poem will have its own place.

Duration: 10:54

I N T E R M I S S I O N

3. I Am Sylvia but Somebody Else (1973)

Simeon ten Holt

S.TEN HOLT was born in Bergen, Holland, in 1923. He studied music with Jakob van Domselaar (1890-1960), and later in Paris, where he spent several years with

where each sound only occurred once, its position being determined by chance, form-orientation was easy.

Duration: 10:15

2. Enchantment (1972)

Luctor Ponse

L.PONSE was born in Geneva and received his early musical training at the Valenciennoes Conservatory, winning in 1930 the "Prix d'Excellence" for theory and solfeggio and in 1932 the same prize for piano. He returned to Geneva in 1933 to complete his studies, and was awarded the "Prix de Virtuosite" in 1935, under Prof. Johnny Aubert. In 1936 he won the Concours Internationale de Composition Henri le Boeuf -- "Jeunesse 1936" -- in Brussels; he has also won the second prize at the Luxembourg Concours Internationale de Composition in 1952. He settled in Amsterdam in 1936, and has since performed as soloist, chamber musician and accompanist. He has had radio engagements at Suisse Romande, NIR-Brussels, BBC, French and Dutch broadcasting stations. He attended the 1965/65 course in electronic music at Bilthoven, Holland, which was directed by G.M.Koenig.

Voltage control is the technical motive of ENCHANTEMENT. The point of departure is a series of 12 sounds which in the 4 dodecaphonic transformations result in 48 pitches of different sounds, and a poem by J.H.W.Veenstra which supplies the intensity and rhythm. A variable function generator, controlled by the words of the poem, activates a sinewave generator in 53 steps (48 steps for the sounds and 5 steps to separate the different serial forms) and a modulator for the dynamics.

The exclusive choice of sinusoidal sounds is a musical one. Although this piece is autonomous, it will be the first part of a work in which the poem will have its own place.

Duration: 10:54

I N T E R M I S S I O N

3. I Am Sylvia but Somebody Else (1973)

Simeon ten Holt

S.TEN HOLT was born in Bergen, Holland, in 1923. He studied music with Jakob van Domselaar (1890-1960), and later in Paris, where he spent several years, with Honegger at the Ecole Normale. As a pianist he has given several concerts of his own music; he has written about music in "Raster", a music magazine, and was co-founder of a work-group for contemporary music in his home-town of Bergen. Since 1969 he has been in contact with the Institute of Sonology, where he studied electronic music and produced "Inferno I" (1970), "Inferno II" (1971), "Module I-IV" (1971) and "I Am Sylvia" (1973). Ten Holt has his own private electronic studio at Bergen.

I AM SYLVIA BUT SOMEBODY ELSE was realized in the summer of 1973 at the Institute of Sonology, commissioned by the "Dr. J.E. Baron de Vos van Steenwijk" Fund, which is under the supervision of the County Aldermen of the Province of North-Holland.

The spoken text on which the realization of the piece is based was conceived for the person who was to sing the title-role and to pose for the acoustic portrait of the human "id" that the author had in mind. The text, which was not so much written for, but rather came into existence under, the skin of (female) corporeality, was a pre-text for making audible the variable, fluctuating states of mind between "sadness and happiness", "fear and confidence". Since the import of the text is not relevant to the understanding of the "id", and not bound by any conditions to the one-way traffic of the spoken or written word, the interpretation, once roused to life, generated into a signal and recorded on tape, was able to serve the composer's aim: the acoustic representation of a person, not as she appears on the outside but as she feels on the inside.

By means of the relativity and reversability of time and space, by means of the blending of above and below, by means of the identification of past, present and future...

This procedure and the piece's structure can be compared with the spatial suggestion of our approaching and retreating image when we stand in front of a mirror.

Built into the structure as a separate dimension, as an explanatory guide, the text which was a pretext and which is now spoken in a normal form, presents itself and addresses itself in time; halfway through the piece it steps as it were through the frame of the mirror.

(Do you remember the words I said to you in the future?)

The normal speaking voice interprets the commentary to the things which occur under the surface in the depths, suggesting the the encounter of person and identity:

I am here
I am over there
I am Sylvia
but somebody else

Performers: Sylvia van Laar, Ileana Melita

Duration: 15:30

4. Aube (1971)

J.L. de Delas

(No program note available.)

Duration: 11:55

5. Screen (1969)

Jaap Vink

J.VINK was born in 1930. As a sound engineer he set up the Bilthoven electronic studio and directed it for six years. Since 1957 he has worked at the Utrecht studio as composer and teacher.

SCREEN dates from 1968. As its title suggests, this composition presents itself as a surface, a vast harmonic surface of which the spectrum evolves in continuous fashion through the action of numerous filters and superimpositions.

(It is from this work that the "Screen-effect" which I

to life, generated into a signal and recorded on tape, to serve the composer's aim: the acoustic representation of a person, not as she appears on the outside but as she feels on the inside.

By means of the relativity and reversability of time and space, by means of the blending of above and below, by means of the identification of past, present and future...

This procedure and the piece's structure can be compared with the spatial suggestion of our approaching and retreating image when we stand in front of a mirror.

Built into the structure as a separate dimension, as an explanatory guide, the text which was a pretext and which is now spoken in a normal form, presents itself and addresses itself in time; halfway through the piece it steps as it were through the frame of the mirror.

(Do you remember the words I said to you in the future?)

The normal speaking voice interprets the commentary to the things which occur under the surface in the depths, suggesting the the encounter of person and identity:

I am here
I am over there
I am Sylvia
but somebody else

Performers: Sylvia van Laar, Ileana Melita

Duration: 15:30

4. Aube (1971)

J.L. de Delas

(No program note available.)

Duration: 11:55

5. Screen (1969)

Jaap Vink

J.VINK was born in 1930. As a sound engineer he set up the Bilthoven electronic studio and directed it for six years. Since 1957 he has worked at the Utrecht studio as composer and teacher.

SCREEN dates from 1968. As its title suggests, this composition presents itself as a surface, a vast harmonic surface of which the spectrum evolves in continuous fashion through the action of numerous filters and superimpositions.

(It is from this work that the "Screen-effect", which J. Vink so kindly demonstrated for me, and which I have used in PERPERTUSA and a new work for viola, diverse instruments and tape, entitled Terribilit , is derived.

-Peter Tod Lewis)

Duration: 7:30

(Except where indicated, all the notes for this program have been furnished by the composers and the Institute of Sonology.)

Forthcoming events: Dec. 10, Composers' Concert II, Harper Hall
Dec. 11, PERPERTUSA, Hancher Aud. Lobby