



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 #27

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. In PROBES #27 we track the modern composer from the scrapyards to the office, then through the living living room and into the kitchen in search of new musical resources - including scrap-metal, typewriters, vacuum cleaners, dot matrix printers, industrial quantities of paper, telephones, and the humble bean.

02. Playlist

- 01 Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978
- 02 Car crusher
- 03 Daniel W. Schmidt, 'And the Darkest Hour Is Just Before the Dawn' (excerpt), 1978
- 04 Gamelan Son of Lion, '40 Random Numbered Clangs' (excerpts), 1982
- 05 Lou Harrison, 'La Koro Sutro' (excerpt), 1973
- 06 Henry Threadgill, 'Release' (excerpts), 1976
- 07 Test Dept., 'Shockwork', 'The Fall from Light' (excerpts), 1984
- 08 Magnus Lindberg, 'Kraft', 1985
- 09 Stomp, 'Bins' (excerpt), 1987
- 10 Stomp, 'Pipes'
- 11 From Scratch, 'Pacific 3-2-1-Zero' (excerpts), 1982
- 12 Skip LaPlante, 'Glyptodont' (excerpts), 1982
- 13 Footsteps
- 14 Ludwig van Beethoven, 'Fifth Symphony' (1804-1808), played by The Recycled Orchestra of Cateura (excerpt), 2014
- 15 Footsteps
- 16 Walking up gravel path, bing bong, opening door
- 17 La Monte Young, 'Poem for Chairs, Tables, Benches, etc.' (excerpt), 1960
- 18 Leroy Anderson, 'The Typewriter' (excerpt), 1953
- 19 Krzysztof Penderecki, 'Fluorescences' (excerpt), 1961/62
- 20 [The User], 'Symphony No.1 for Dot Matrix Printers. Part 16' (excerpts), 1998
- 21 Tan Dun, 'Paper Concerto' (excerpt), 2003
- 22 Tan Dun, 'Paper Concerto' (excerpt), 2003
- 23 Golan Levin, Scott Gibbons, Gregory Shaker, 'Dialtones' (excerpts), 2001
- 24 Annie Gosfield, 'Electric Sweepers and Vacuum Creepers' (excerpts), 2015
- 25 Alison Knowles, 'Sounds from the Book of Bean' (excerpt), 1981

03. 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



[Gamelan Son of Lion playing in a loft in Soho, Manhattan in 2007]

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 with subject: Probe Me.

04. 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 and designed by Yasushi Utsunomia, and a home-made compressor by EM Thomas. Edited using a PC and Samplitude Pro version 12.5.1.

05. Acknowledgments

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06. Copyright note

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