



## 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.

**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, The Science Group and p53 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 regularly 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...), The Artaud Beats and The Artbears Songbook. Adjacent projects include commissioned works for radio, various live movie soundtracks, *Signe de Trois* for surround-sound projection, the daily year-long soundscape project Out of the Blue Radio (for Resonance FM) and p53 for Orchestra and Soloists.

He founded and runs the independent label ReR Megacorp and the art distribution service Gallery and Academic, is editor of the occasional sourcebook *Unfiled*, author of the book *File Under Popular* – and many articles and papers published in 16 languages. He was on faculty for a while at the Museum School in Boston and lectures irregularly on theoretical and music related topics worldwide. He has appeared on over 160 recordings.  
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# PROBES #9.2

## Auxiliaries

The PROBES Auxiliaries collect materials related to each episode that try to give a broader – and more immediate – impression of the field. They are a scan, not a deep listening vehicle; an indication of what further investigation might uncover and, for that reason, most are edited snapshots of longer pieces. We have tried to light the corners as well as the central arena, and to not privilege so-called serious over so-called popular genres. This auxiliary explores extended techniques for wind instruments and percussion.

### 01. Playlist

#### 00:00 Programme icon

Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978

#### 00:06 George Kollias, speed exercise (excerpt), 2013

George Kollias is a Greek heavy metal drummer, particularly known for his pedal technique, common in various forms amongst metal drummers, which involves super rapid alternation of ball and heel driven from the ankle to achieve terrifying speeds. On this youtube video extract, he takes would be students through his exercise regime.

#### 01:07 Luciano Berio, 'Sequenza VII for Oboe' (excerpt), 1969

Between 1958 and 2002, Luciano Berio wrote a series of 14 virtuoso works for solo instruments, minutely exploring a wide range of extended techniques, linked by the umbrella title Sequenza – brilliantly worked catalogues of extended techniques written for virtuosi, meaning often that the writing is quite open and flexible and that the player, like virtuosi of old, is meant to make a significant contribution to the work's final shape. The sequenza for oboe was originally written for Heinz Holliger and here it is played by Jacqueline Leclair, who produced a revised edition of the score in 2000.

#### 02:36 Roscoe Mitchell, 'Congliptious/Old' (excerpt), 1968

In all but name this was the Art Ensemble of Chicago, before they adopted the name. Roscoe Mitchell, alto, soprano and bass saxophones, flute and recorder, with Lester Bowie, trumpet, flugelhorn, steerhorn, Malachi Favors, basses and Robert Crowder, drums. Founding members of the Chicago Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM), they took an aesthetic path more influenced by contemporary European music than their New York contemporaries, adopting more, and more varied, extended techniques than most American jazz musicians of the time.

#### 03:26 Gene Krupa, 'Drum Boogie', 1941

Taken from the film *Ball of Fire* – that's Barbara Stanwyck whispering the numbers. Krupa plays with two matchsticks on a matchbox, and at the end lights both matches.

#### 03:54 Luciano Berio, 'Sequenza X for Trumpet in C and Piano Resonance' (excerpt), 1984

Commissioned by the Los Angeles Philharmonic for Thomas Stevens and performed here by William Forman, it features flutter tonguing, double tonguing, doodle tonguing, pedal tones, and valve tremolos – with a strong focus on continuous timbral modulation.

#### 05:48 John Coltrane, 'Om Part 1' (excerpt), 1965

'Om means the first vibration – that sound, that spirit that sets everything else into being. It is the Word from which all men and everything else comes, including all possible sounds that man can make vocally. It is first syllable, the



[Chico Hamilton Quintet 'In Hi-fi', 1956]

primal word, the word of power.' Coltrane on the sleeve notes of the LP, which was released in 1968.

**07:19 Luciano Berio, 'Gesti' (excerpt), 1966**

Not part of the *Sequenza* series, but it could well have been since all the same principles are involved. Written for Frans Brüggen and played here by Lucia Mense, it involves much singing into the instrument.

**08:40 Luciano Berio, 'Sequenza XII for Bassoon' (excerpt), 1995**

Written originally for the French bassoonist Pascal Gallois, it is played here by Noriko Shimada, and features circular breathing, a great deal of glissando, reed manipulation and a variety of multiphonics produced by singing into the bassoon.

**10:38 Vinko Globokar, 'Voix Instrumentalisée' (excerpt), 1973**

For bass clarinet, here performed by Lisa Preimesberger, in 2012. The mouthpiece is removed and the performer has to sing, speak and blow into the instrument while fingering the notes, sometimes with very audible key-clicking. The text is based on the sentence 'L'art et la science ne peuvent exister sans la possibilité d'exprimer des idées paradoxales.'

**12:25 Karlheinz Stockhausen, 'Der Jahreslauf' (excerpt), 1977**

For four dancer-mimes, an actor, three mimes, a little girl, a beautiful woman, gagaku orchestra, tape and sound projection, it was commissioned by the National Theatre in Tokyo and first performed by the Imperial Gagaku Ensemble. All further performances, starting in 1979, were revised for European instruments: three harmoniums, anvil, three piccolos, bongo, three soprano saxophones, bass drum, harpsichord and guitar.

**15:41 Erwin Schulhoff working as Eman Balzar, (edited) 'Susi', 1937**

Another composer with no fear of saxophones was the great and greatly overlooked Czech composer and sometime Dadaist, Erwin Schulhoff, greatly respected in his early career as a leading contemporary composer, as well as being one of the first jazz pianists in Europe. As a result of these two crimes – and for being a Jew with communist leanings – he was blacklisted and assigned to the Nazi's degenerate composers list. At first he survived by working in various fields under a series of pseudonyms – of which Eman Balzar was just one. Although in 1941 the Soviet Union approved his petition for citizenship, he was arrested before he could leave and deported to the concentration camp near Wülzburg, where he died in 1942.

**18:20 Michael Reudenbach, 'Mirlitonades pour petite flûte' (excerpt), 1991**

Michael Reudenbach, born 1956, first studied ecclesiastical music and later was a student of both Helmut Lachenmann and Mathias Spahlinger. This piece explores the solo piccolo flute.

**20:04 Elliott Carter, 'Canto' (excerpts), 1966**

One of eight pieces for timpani written as studies in tempo modulation and the use of four-note chords, six of which were written in 1950 and two – of which 'Canto' was one – in 1966. All explore extended techniques, including playing with the back end of the timpani sticks, varying the beating spot on the drumhead, glissandi, and sympathetic vibrations. 'Canto' is played with snare drum sticks with much use of continuous glissandi. Carter was born in 1906 and died in 2012, and was very active throughout his long life.

**21:28 Seijiro Murayama, 'Snare No. 2' (excerpt), 2009**

Taken from a CD of very minimal pieces for snare drum by Japanese percussionist Seijiro Murayama. Here it sounds as if he is using wire brushes in highly unconventional way.

**22:39 The Chico Hamilton Quintet, 'Drums West' (excerpt), 1956**

Chico Hamilton was a fascinating figure in the history of mid twentieth century jazz (a few of the people he played with in a long career: Charles Mingus, Illinois Jacquet, Dexter Gordon, Buddy Collette, Lionel Hampton, T-Bone Walker, Lester Young, Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Billy Eckstine, Nat King Cole, Sammy Davis



[Spike Jonze and his City Slickers]

Jr., Billie Holiday, Gerry Mulligan, Lena Horne and Fred Astaire). He was, in his own right an important figure in the West Coast jazz scene with many bands under his own name. Amongst which were those with cellist Fred Katz that mixed chamber music and jazz vocabularies. My ears tell me that this solo is played with his fingers.

**23:33 Big Jay McNeely, 'Deacon's Hop' (edited), 1949**

There are ten million honking sax tracks in *The Naked City* and this is one of the best. The honking style was made famous by Illinois Jacquet in the mid forties; Big Jay was a leading exponent.

**24:38 Grimethorpe Colliery Band, 'Danny Boy' (edited), 1965**

Recorded for the film *Brassed Off*, this is one of the great northern brass (no reeds) bands doing what they all do, which is to create ineffably exquisite composite timbres. The brass employed: one Soprano E $\flat$  Cornet, nine B $\flat$  Cornets, one Flugelhorn, three Tenor Horns, two Baritone horns, two Tenor Trombones, one Bass Trombone, two Euphoniums, two E $\flat$  tubas and two B $\flat$  tubas.

**26:12 Hans Werner Henze, 'Prison Song' (excerpt), 1971**

Hans Werner Henze, German contemporary composer, born 1926, wrote this setting of a poem by Ho Chi Minh for the Japanese percussionist Stomu Yamashita. Scored for pre-recorded tape, Asian flute and various exotic percussion instruments built for the piece by the sculptors François and Bernard Baschet. The percussionist reacts to and imitates the sounds on the tape, which represent the world immediately outside his prison cell.

**27:00 George Russell, 'Chromatic Universe Part 1' (excerpt), 1960**

George Russell was a tireless experimenter; a drummer who became a pianist and went on to front a series of innovative bands in America and Europe. Perhaps most notably (inside the community) it was he who developed, in his 1953 book *Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization*, an harmonic theory – often referred to as the modal theory – that transformed the jazz vocabulary. Most famously Miles Davis' *Kind of Blue* first extrapolated its tenets to the wider listening world. In this introduction to a song, a string of beads is used to play a bongo.

**27:56 Spike Jones and his City Slickers, 'Hotcha Cornia (Black Eyes)' (excerpt), 1942**

Another drummer, born in 1911, of comic bent, who led an inspired group of virtuosi performing absurdities and parodies of popular songs which, at times, strayed close to genius. Hyper-inventive, no band better demonstrated the link between improvisation, extended techniques and comedy – one place where the most outré techniques can be employed in a virtuosic way, without causing remark.

**29:10 Michael Pisaro & Greg Stuart, 'Ricefall' (excerpt), 2010**

A great deal of rice, at varying densities, is rained on a miscellany of objects (metal, wood, stone, plastic, paper, ceramic, dry leaves etc.) for about 16-18 minutes. It's dropped here (multitracked) by Greg Stuart in collaboration with the American guitarist and composer Michael Pisaro.

**Programme icon**

Gregorio Paniagua, 'Anakrousis', 1978

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## 02. 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.

For your listening pleasure I have, as always, been cavalier in editing the tracks together, overlapping them, making sometimes hard-to-spot joins, etc. – so, for the sake of clarity, I have prefaced each track with its start time.

**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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### 03. Credits

Recorded at Studio Midi-Pyrénées. Engineered by Bob Drake.

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### 04. Acknowledgments

With thanks to Bob Drake, Philippe Glandien, Bill Sharp, Dave Petts and Chuck O' Meara.

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### 05. Copyright note

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