

172

Jacob Ter Veldhuis (1951) studied composition with Willem Frederik Bon and electronic music with Luctor Ponse at the Groningen Conservatory in the Netherlands. In 1980 he was awarded the Dutch Prize for Composition. His voluminous oeuvre includes compositions for orchestra and chamber ensembles in various combinations, vocal music as well as music for film, ballet, theatre, and circus. His music is published by Donemus and others and can be heard on a great many CD's. Ter Veldhuis was worldwide performed by outstanding musicians and ensembles like: The Groningen Guitar Duo, the Dufy Quartet, the Slagwerkgroep Den Haag, the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Annelie de Man, Thora Johansen, the Penderecki Quartet, the New Jersey Percussion Ensemble, the Noordelijk Filharmonisch Orkest, the Duo Berman Wieringa, Djoke Winkler Prins, the Nederlands Strijkkwartet, Marjanne Kweksilber & Stanley Hoogland, the Duo Contemporain, Bill Anderson, the Nederlands Klarinetkwartet, Charles van Tassel, the Basho Ensemble, De Ereprijs, Roger Heaton,

Dag Jensen, Miny Dekkers, the Classical Accordion Duo, the Safri Duo, Jeffrey Jacob, Pierre Lafay, the Ensemble Huit et Demi, the Jeugd Orkest Nederland, the Arion Ensemble, the Utrechts Vocaal Ensemble, Kamerorkest Driebergen, Grethe de Vink & Dick Leutscher, Marien van Staalen, Tan Crone and many others. Worldwide broadcasts by BBC, ABC, BRT, SFB, WDR etc. Ter Veldhuis received commissions by the Fonds voor de Scheppende Toonkunst, the Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst, the province and the city of Groningen, the NOVAM, the Johan Wagenaarstichting, the LOAM, the city of Copenhagen and other institutions.

Ter Veldhuis has his musical roots in the sixties and seventies. Through a background in rock bands, he entered the Groningen Conservatory, where he soon got involved with electronic music, as he frequented the small studio there led by Luctor Ponse, who taught him the techniques and possibilities of the new media.

Jacob Ter Veldhuis now owns a sophisticated electronic studio, Studio Toonbeeld, where he composes his scores and tapes.

**DE ZUCHTEN VAN RAMEAU (LES SOUPIRS DE RAMEAU)**

*De Zuchten van Rameau (The Sighs of Rameau)* opus 71, a multi media work for harpsichord, tape and slide projection, commissioned in 1995 by the Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst, was dedicated to Annelie de Man. Visual artist Kristien Kerstens made the images, to be projected on the lid of the instrument. (Six examples of these images can be seen on the cover of this booklet.) The composition was inspired by 'Les Soupirs' from the Suite no. 2, Pièces de Clavecin, 1724 by Jean Philippe Rameau. There are traces of that piece in 'De Zuchten', like the D major key and the upbeat F#-G-A which is a Leitmotif. The French word 'le soupir' means: sigh, but also: a quarternote rest.

The harpsichord itself is subject of the composition. In 1987, Annelie de Man had her instrument re-designed by Sies Bleeker, who removed all original baroque characteristics. In *De Zuchten van Rameau* it's the other way around: In search of the nature of the harpsichord Kerstens and Ter Veldhuis rediscovered baroque elements like symmetry, ornamentation, fugato structures, arpeggio's, a basso continuo and a passacaglia. *De Zuchten van Rameau* is a composition about, on, in, around, under,

above and before the harpsichord, that was sampled in every possible way, by microphone and camera.

It is quite obvious that the harpsichord is from a different era: rather small in sound and size, the instrument is, in spite of its baroque swiftness, also rather cool and austere, with its stiff mechanism and its 'invisible' (hidden) hands. The historical distance of nearly 3 ages causes a lot of drama: The music is rather centrifugal, and transforms the small sound of the harpsichord into a giant machine that threatens to explode, whereas the images are much more centripetal, still and intimate, focalizing.

There are 2 quotations in the score, which represent the first and the second movement: Louis XIV: 'Les routes de nuit sont si peu sûres'. (The nocturnal roads are so little safe.) Guillaume Apollinaire: 'Et des mains vers le ciel plain de lacs de lumière s'envolaient quelquefois comme des oiseaux blancs'. (And hands to the sky full of lakes of light sometimes fly away like white birds.) (from: L'émigrant de Landor Road.) The tape features a special guest: It's the scops owl (otus scops), the same bird on which Ter Veldhuis once based his Toccata.