

MUSICA da/per CASO

Ho conosciuto Ale Guzzetti nel 1982, lavorando assieme in teatro, io alle musiche e lui alle scenografie; grande divertimento e giovani attrici agitate contribuirono a cementare il nostro rapporto per approfondirlo poi in grandi riflessioni a due non tanto su un progetto artistico preciso, ma soprattutto sulla voglia di trovare una strada per cui contaminarsi a vicenda e vicendevolmente affermare la propria libertà. Siamo riusciti a superare quasi ogni dipendenza formale dalla tecnologia in quanto tale e, conoscendola a fondo, abbiamo mantenuto e riscoperto quella componente di piacere dell'arte e del quotidiano "carnoso" che a tutt'oggi ci accompagna in questa "unica vita", che altre non ce n'è". (G. Majorino)

In musica, il mio problema negli ultimi anni, era quello di ridurre le distanze tra un ambito formale chiuso ed uno contestualistico senza dubbio ormai già completamente sperimentato, ma sicuramente aperto e potenzialmente comunicativo; dichiaravo la mia voglia, il mio desiderio di perturbazioni. Non tanto di generi o di specifici, ma di strutture formali che, trattate come elementi in esperienze diverse, potessero divenire altro luogo ed altro tempo.

La casualità e la necessità all'interno dell'evoluzione della partitura, erano alcuni dei concetti a cui pensavo "a lato" della mia esperienza artistica, e la possibilità di accedere tramite elaboratore a dei prodotti finiti quasi in tempo reale, mi confermava che queste tensioni potevano essere formalizzate; "Cena da Titti" è stato il primo risultato di composizione per sculture, voci e strumenti che mi ha permesso di intravedere una organizzazione musicale del "diverso" ordinando il disordine.

Non contento, ho composto di getto "Con Elena e Fanny", mantenendo ricorsivo il metodo, ma applicando agli elementi miei specifici (i suoni); la casualità ha organizzato non solo il materiale formale, ma anche e soprattutto la mia memoria musicale: Puccini e Stravinskij di fianco guardano e pensano assorti...

B.D.F.

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I met Ale Guzzetti in 1982, I was working on music stage and he was working on the scenery; a great fun as well as unruly young actresses contributed to bind our friendship and later on to deepen it with witty considerations not so much on an accurate arts project but on the impulse to find the way to play on each other to assert our own freedom.

We manage to get through any formal technological resource as such, and knowing it deeply, we have maintained and rediscovered the pleasure for the art and the "sensual" daily life that up to this time leads us in this "unique life, since there won't be a second time". (G. Majorino)

In recent years my problem in music has been to shorten the distances between a formal restricted field in comparison with a field full of content without any doubt already thoroughly well-tried, but surely broad as well as the communicative one; I claimed my wish of excitement.

I didn't research genres, but formal structures which, handled as units in new experiences, could become another place, another time.

In the development of the score, the fortuity and the fate were two of the ideas I thought "aside" of my artistic experience, so the chance to reach qualified results through the computer, proved that these strains could be formalized; "Dinner at Titti's" has been the first result of composition for sculpture, voices and instruments which allowed me to perceive a musical organization of the "unlike" organizing the confusion. Not satisfied, I have tossed off "Con Elena e Fanny", keeping the method recurrent but applying it to my specific elements (the sounds); the case has organized not only the formal material, but also and above all my musical mind: Puccini and Stravinskij side by side observe and reflect.

B.D.F.

There are... various strange and artificial echoes which repeat the many voices over and over again, reverberating the sounds.

Some transmit the voices back in a higher pitch, others in a lower pitch, while still others transmit the letters and the articulation back in a form which differs from the original enunciation.

Francis Bacon, *New Atlas*, (1926)

SOUND SCULPTURE

Upon entering an anechoic chamber — a completely sound-proof room — John Cage was nevertheless aware of two sounds, one high-pitched and the other low. “When I described them to the technician”, the musician explained, “he told me that the high-pitched was the sound of my nervous system, and the low-pitched tone was the sound of my blood circulating... Silence does not exist. Something always creates sound”.

More than ever before in history, our lives seem to be shaped around the sounds which envelop, penetrate, and imbue it, as if sustained by some perpetual soundtrack.

A human being is incapable of duplicating sound; from the moment mankind achieved this ability, through the advent of computer and audio technology, the sound-environment in which we live will never be the same. Not only has the dividing line separating sound from noise ceased to exist, but we no longer distinguish between artificial and natural sound.

The very rhythm of life, the underlying, organic “soundtrack” John Cage had referred to, is now barely perceptible, like a flat plane increasingly overlapped by noises of every kind: mechanical sounds, electronic sounds, and the repetitious, *dismembered* eroded acoustic promptings emitted by a multitude of loudspeakers.

For example, consider the experience of travelling by train, in which one finds himself in the midst of a great plurality of sounds-voices, music, etc.

Any small group of people acts out its own particular semantic performance, and the observer can only catch excerpts but can not be sure of their source. On a train, these phonic sources are in turn competing with the rumblings of the train, an undefinable yet unmistakable sound.

The phonic combination is further disjointed by bits of music from a radio, miscellaneous fragments of prefabricated acoustic material. The overall effect is comparable to the proverbial Chinese boxes although, paradoxically, the smallest contains all the others.

All control of sound is lost, in contrast to another Chinese legend which tells the story of a black box (yet another kind of **black box**) which contained the spoken orders of the king and which had to be obeyed by his kingdom.

In losing the control over sound through the death of what Deleuze and Guattari termed “the imperial phonetic image”, no black box could possibly contain all the noise in the world. Russolo has said that silence is over, but similarly the utopia of “a music of the body” has also disappeared, a harmonious existence which does not take the blaring sound of chaos into consideration as one of its essential components. It is as if we’ve landed in the middle of Joyce *Finnegan’s Wake*. It is certainly no accident that Ale Guzzetti, in this installation, starting from an earlier homage by Luciano Berio.

Finnegan’s Wake presents Joyce at his most extreme: the Joyce who makes attempts at “circling the square” in order to make room for all of chaos-linguistic, semantic, phonetic, artistic, and ideological. He then reintroduces, chaos in its

most classical form: an “*enkyklopaideia*” of All Things (H.C.E., Here Comes Everybody), and a new **chaosmos**.

The issue for Joyce was to give the new polyphony a voice, perhaps in dodecaphonic form. Beckett had already noted that the new art forms had to accept chaos without expecting that “chaos is extraneous to art forms. Form and chaos will remain apart, and chaos will not be reduced to form”. The epistemological complexity has heeded Beckett’s words as if it were its duty. In a complex and pluralistic situation, infinitely varied forms coexist, and the individual characteristics might be magnified and distorted but they are never united in a single, polyphonic chorus.

To use once more an analogy to sound, it is as if we are unescapably surrounded by noise pollution, although it does at least have a cathartic effect. Indeed this noise pollution restores our sense of hearing, our perception of perceiving, linking blurry perceptions to crystalline apperceptions (as Leibniz had defined them), and enhancing both our “audio-view point” and our “visual rhythm”. (In fact in *Finnegan’s Wake*, Joyce defines the radio as a “*vaticum cleander*”, a cross between a **vacuum cleaner** and **vaticinium**).

Ale Guzzetti’s work also moves along these lines; there is a perfect coalescence between the “sonic objects” themselves and the plastic objects from which they are made. Both are a random collage of refuse (at times recognizable forms such as the box of detergent hint at a comprehensible phenomenon) lumped together by a logic devoid of rational consistency.

Guzzetti’s objects reflect the crazed do-it-yourself hyperactivity — acoustic, esthetic, informational, mental and natural hyperactivity — which the average viewer is subject to in his day-to-day life. (On the train I could grasp nearly the entirety of each element, but the sum of each is simultaneously its own Totality: one can’t fit a round peg in a square hole).

Where as in his previous work Guzzetti had only suggested we look beyond the concept of an “object” as a visible and perhaps tangible entity, granting a voice to inert substance and material weight to sound, in this installation the artist has moved ahead to record sonic “events”.

The changing lights, the chairs incorporated into the work, the plurality of sound register and their dislocation throughout the piece, create a do-it yourself theatre in which the leading role is played by the viewer.

Each element refers to the other; a passage of poetry (Majorino) is associated with a musical passage (De Franceschi). The chaotic dust is shaped into sudden, fleeting entities which join the many fragments — phonic, semantic, physical, tangible, visual fragments — together.

The viewer-listener-actor’s ability to assimilate information and make associations is thus “put to work”.

These sound machines, “exploiting” our visual labor, aim at restoring our ability to perceive phenomena purely, *ex novo*. What the artist offers here is not so much the object itself but the event of perceiving it.

These are machines which allow for our becoming whole.