

4169

Prix Ars Electronica 97
Computer Music
Title of the work: "Figuras Flamencas"
Author: Mario Verandi

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Biography:

Mario Verandi (RA), born 1960 in Buenos Aires, studied Music and Computing at University in Argentina. He continued his studies at the Phonos Electroacoustic Music Laboratory in Barcelona and later at Birmingham University in England. In addition to his acousmatic music works, he has composed music and sound environments for art installations, dance, video and theatre. His works have been performed, recorded and broadcast worldwide and some of them received international awards. He is currently researching on interactive multimedia systems.

Description of the artistic concept:

"Figuras Flamencas"

In this piece the source materials are from sampled flamenco musical extracts and some texts taken from the theatre play "*Bodas de Sangre*" ("*Blood Wedding*") by the Spanish writer F. G Lorca. By means of computer processing I have tried to create a surreal parallel sound world out of the recognizable flamenco sound world. The musical discourse flows as a sequence of superimposed and juxtaposed transformations and confrontations between the flamenco sound world and the surreal sound world.

The piece is clearly divided into four sections and attempts to evoke a metaphorical journey across a flamenco dreamland which is "corrupted by undefined sonic creatures". Lorca's duende(1) had to be present in this journey and his texts were the source of inspiration behind the music as well as the core element to organise the musical discourse.

The texts were recited by the young Spanish actors Javier Letran and Conchi Almeria.

"*Figuras Flamencas*" was composed in the Electroacoustic Music Studios at Birmingham University in 1996.

(1) Duende: in Spanish speaking countries, a kind of goblin which gives inspiration.

YJ69

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Additional information:

The source materials were classified into the following groups: string sounds (guitars), percussive sounds (castanets, flamenco tap dance, clapping and drums), vocal sounds (flamenco singing) and spoken texts. Sounds of each group were processed and transformed in order to obtain new parallel groups. These parallel groups contain ambiguous and abstract textures which represent the unfamiliar sound world. Within this sound universe, I dealt with levels of recognizable/unrecognizable or familiar/unfamiliar.

For the composition of this work the following computer software were used: Sound Designer, GRM Tools, Hyperprism, SoundHack, CDP (Computer Desktop Project), Lexicon PCM80, MDT and Pro-Tools.

Spanish texts from "Blood Wedding" and their English translation:

Female voice:

"Sangre que ve la luz se la bebe la tierra"
"Blood that sees the light is drunk up by the earth"

*"...y apenas cabe en la mano,
pero que penetra frio
por las carnes asombradas
y alli se para, en el sitio
donde tiembla enmaraniada
la oscura raiz del grito"*
*"...and it barely fits the hand
but it slides in clean
through the astonished flesh
and stops there, at the place
where trembles enmeshed
the dark root of a scream"*

Male voice:

*"Ay muerte que sales!
muerte de las grandes hojas.
Ay muerte sola!
muerte de las secas hojas.
Ay triste muerte!
deja para el amor la rama verde.
Ay mala muerte!
deja para el amor la verde rama"*

MJ69

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*O rising death!
death among the great leaves.
O lonely death!
death among the dried leaves.
O sad death!
leave for their love a branch of green.
O evil death!
leave for their love a green branch"*

*"Ay luna que sale!
luna de las grandes hojas.
Ay luna sola!
luna de las verdes hojas.
Ay lune mala!
deja para el amor la oscura rama.
Ay triste luna!
deja para el amor la rama oscura"*

*"O rising moon!
moon among the great leaves.
O lonely moon!
moon of the green leaves.
O evil moon!
leave for their love a branch in shadow.
O sorrowing moon!
leave for their love a branch in shadow"*

*"Las pata heridas
las crines heladas
dentro de los ojos
un punial de plata.
Bajaban al rio,
Ay como bajaban!
la sangre corria
mas fuerte que el agua"*

*"The poor hooves were bleeding
the long mane was frozen,
and deep in the eyes
struck a silvery dagger.
Down they went to the river
Oh down, they went down!
and the blood was running
Oh more than the water!"*