



Orchestrated Bodies and Choreographed Sounds

PHONOMANIACS

a multimedia concert with electroacoustic costumes

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PHONOMANIACS: a sound-opera event for electro-acoustic costumes.

This is a multidisciplinary and site-specific media opera taking place on and offstage -- both inside and outside the different rooms of a large building. The performers wear site-specific electroacoustic ("sounding") clothes that interact with their environment.

This project would involve the following disciplines: dance, sports, sound-art, street theatre, multimedia, video, performance, fashion and the Internet. It would include the following performance elements/pieces and electro-acoustic costumes: AUDIO BALLERINAS (dance), VIDEO PEACOCKS (video+internet), AUDIO GEISHAS (light), AUDIO CYCLISTS(sports), BONG BOYS/ AUDIO VACUUM CLEANERS (street theatre), GUITAR MONKEYS (music), and FEEDBACK FRED (performance). This "sound opera" (length: 3 hours) is a "modular" event -- the chronology and selection of performances are decided according to the building or sites and includes the following performance elements:

1. **AUDIO BALLERINAS** with following choreographies: THE LINE(electronic rakes that play the surfaces of stairwells and tunnels), YAMAHA(electronic sounds triggered by movement sensors while the dancers "work" a large outdoor space), PEEPERS (dancers react to the natural or artificial lighting of a room), RADIO (interaction of dancers with radio receivers). DIGITAL MEMORY – sound choreography using digital samplers and live voice.

2. **AUDIO PEACOCKS** male performers wear an „audio-plumage“ that is highly directional and functions like an electroacoustic radar dish. They can either amplify their own electronic instruments and voices (via microphones + sampler) or receive sounds from outside sources via monitor/receivers. Four Audio Peacock units can be acoustically choreographed as a mobile quadrophonic loudspeaker system – for example a portable techno ensemble where the four channels of sound are being continually restructured via the positions of the individual performers in a large room.

VIDEO PEACOCKS use their white plexiglass costumes as mobile projection screens onto which videos and the internet can be projected via beamer. Additionally the Peacocks' voices and sounds can be turned into live graphic patterns via an oszilloscope and microphone. The sound patterns are projected onto the performers' costumes as they speak: spectators can see the Peacock's voice on the translucent costume -- in effect he is visually „wearing“ the sound.

3. **AUDIO GEISHAS** is a spectacular audio-visual stage-show that starts within the audience and involves a full array of lighting elements (40 PAR lamps, light trees, stroboscopes, mixingboard with technician). The performers' Audio Kimonos are equipped with samplers that are triggered via the interaction of their LED sensors, their movement, and the stage lighting.

4. **AUDIO CYCLISTS** are a group of 10 cyclists, skateboarders, skaters, breakdancers or joggers that are equipped with electro-acoustic jerseys and Walkmans that individually play back 10-track tape recordings while going about their business. The performers in effect wear a sound corset underneath their clothes so that the sounds can also be also played "invisibly" through normal urban uniforms (sanitation workers, guards, business suits, street clothes) – other performances may be substituted according to the local urban mood: For these performances it is possible to work with local performing artists and students:

5. **BONG BOYS** (45 minutes) Performers in tuxedo jackets (no visible electronics) wearing loudspeaker corsets with the sound of a very loud "bong". The performers "work" an area by "accidentally" bumping into various objects or persons. **AUDIO VACUUM CLEANERS:** sanitation worker uniforms with electroacoustic corsets and the recorded sound



AUDIO BALLETS

Choreographed Sounds and Orchestrated Movements:
Performances with movement and light



AUDIO BALLERINAS. Park of Sansoucis, Potsdamer Musikfestspiele, 2000.
Light-to-frequency sensors enable them to produce sounds through the interaction of their movements and the surrounding light.



AUDIO BALLERINAS

Dancers with electroacoustic Tutus and digital samplers.
Movements sensors allow them to trigger their sounds
via their choreography.





BONG BOYS . Performers in tuxedo jackets (no visible electronics) wearing loudspeaker corsets with the sound of a very loud "bong". The performers "work" a crowd by "accidentally" bumping into various objects or persons with their head or shoulder (a pole, a tree, streetlight, or a passersby shoulder), when they hit this object they trigger a loud "BONG". This continues over an area until all 10 climax together by "bonging" altogether in a group choreography.



AUDIO VACUUM CLEANERS

Sanitation Worker Uniforms with electroacoustic corsets and the recorded sound of vacuum cleaners.



AUDIO BICYCLISTS. 1988, Festival des Arts Electroniques, Rennes. 10 "audio jerseys" with loudspeakers . Sound: the voice of Bernard Hinault. 10 amateur racers race through the streets of Rennes.

from left to right:
R. Buron (sound), Bernard Hinault,
B. Maubrey



AUDIO GEISHA

ICC-NTT, Tokyo 1997.

Electroacoustic Kimono, sampler and photoresistors.

Live sampled sounds are triggered by light sensors.



AUDIO GEISHAS

Kunstlerschloss Wiepersdorf, 2007

Electroacoustic kimono + guitars + samplers.



AUDIO PEACOCKS (2005-2007)
polycarbonat-plexiglass costumes, voice, microphone, sampler, and filters (loop + pitch).



VIDEO PEACOCK (work-in-progress)

A white plexiglass costume is used as mobile projection screen. A video beamer projects live images, internet transmissions and blogs onto the costume. Using computer visual software the "peacock's" voice and sounds can be used to manipulate the projected images.





VIDEO PEACOCKS wear white costumes that are used as a mobile projection screens. This is an audio-visual concert where the electro-acoustic quality of an Audio Peacock is visually enhanced via a video projector: images from a video recorder, the internet or closed circuit cameras are "beamed" onto the costume. Via interactive computer software and closed-circuit camera the performer can interact with the visual effects



SORBEN 3000

A mobile multimedia performance using original traditional Sorbish costumes from lower Lausitz (Germany). Hats, aprons and shawls are equipped with sound-to-light LED technology enabling them to react to the sound that they produce (among others, traditional Sorbish songs and instruments). Other sounds (produced by the ELECTRONIC GUY) are transmitted wirelessly to the dancers.



PHONIC BODIES and CHOREOGRAPHED SOUNDS
Performances with electro-acoustic clothes

My decision in the early 1980s to stop working with pigments and canvas came from a desire to interact directly with the environment. By building loudspeakers into clothes I could intervene in any given environment in a temporary and cost-efficient way: loudspeakers and circuitboards are cheap and can be salvaged from surplus electronics and disguardated toys. The artistic tools I use are electroacoustic clothes equipped with loudspeakers and amplifying systems that allow the individual wearers to react acoustically to the space around them. Basically each person wears one part of a composition: the position of the individual „audio actors“ and their movement within a space produces the final composition. Series of different "audio clothes" are developed in regards to a particular theme or site as "Audio Uniforms" (see AUDIO HERD, AUDIO STEELWORKERS, AUDIO VACUUM CLEANERS, GUITAR MONKEYS, AUDIO CYCLISTS) or in relation to a local culture (see AUDIO GEISHAS/ Japan, AUDIO JEANS/ USA, AUDIO HANBOK/Korea).

Basically my concept is to integrate local costumes and clothes and empower them with site-specific sounds so as to interpret their environment in a new way.

A few recent examples:

-- developed for the Festival Les ARTS AU SOLEIL the solar-powered AUDIO BALLERINAS (see photo below of an electroacoustic tutu) use a variety of electronic instruments among others, "digital memories" (numeric samplers) that enabled them to record and manipulate the sounds and voices around them. A variety of other electronic instruments (light sensors, contact microphones, and radio receivers) allowed them also to work with the sounds, surfaces, topographies and radio signals of the area.

-- the recent AUDIO PEACOCKS (developed in our village of Baitz/Brandenburg) use plexiglass costumes shaped into a peacock's fan-like plumage. They are equipped with 16 loudspeakers and 150 watts power. The "audio-plumage" is highly directional and functions like an electroacoustic radar dish. Much in the same way that the courtyard peacock "strutts his stuff" in front of a pea-hen and imposes with his awesome cry, so does the Audio Peacock stalk his architectural prey -- using sound as a scalpel that cuts through air and sculpts it. An Audio Peacock can either amplify and alter its own voice or electronic instruments using a microphone, sampler, and filters (loop + pitch), play pre-recorded sounds, or receive sounds via transmitter/receiver. As VIDEO PEACOCK (wearing white plexiglass "skins") these electroacoustic birds patrol a more limited space and darkened environment. Their audio costumes double as mobile projection screens: when-ever their paths intersect the light of a video projector the costumes metamorphasize into multi-colored screens. Colorful visualizations (movies, pictures, internet blogs, computer-enhanced images and closed circuit camera views) are "beamed" onto them as they play their sounds. As a multi-media/phonic installation the parcours of these Cyber-birds is choreographed vis-a-vis to the emplacement of the projectors in the architectural space.

CV : Benoît Maubrey

Benoît Maubrey was born of French parents in Washington DC in 1952. He graduated in 1975 with a Bachelor of Arts Diploma from Georgetown University. In 1979 he moved to West Berlin and after the collapse of the former East Germany moved to the state of Brandenburg where he and his partner Susken Rosenthal founded the non-profits arts organization Kunstpflug e.V. His performance and installation work has been presented in many international art festivals, Since 1990 he lives and works in the village of Baitz (near Belzig, Brandenburg/).

Since 1983 numerous performances and exhibitions (a selection):

Ars Electronica (1985), SONAMBIENTE/ Academy of Arts Berlin(1996), Tokyo City Opera/ NTT-ICC (1997), International Symposium of Electronic Arts/Chicago (1997), The Kitchen /NYC, Monaco Dance Danses Forum (2000), Seoul Performing Arts Festival, Location One/NYC, Gracia Territoria Sonor/Barcelona, (2003), Thailand New Media Art Festival/Bangkok, Sitalines Festival/NYC (2006), Schloss Moyland/ Joseph Beuys Archive. (2007), Mostra des Artes/ Sao Paulo (2008).

Awards: Prix Ars Electronica 1991 Anerkennung , European Award for Street Theatre/Holzmin-den 1995, Franklin Furnace Fund for Performance NYC 2006, Palmarès du 35e Concours Internationaux de Musique et d'Art Sonore Electroacoustiques de Bourges 2004 (the LINE) and 2009 (CyberBirds), Grand Prix International Video Danse 2002 (Mention Speciale). Marler Video Installations Prize 2008, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl.

Grants:

1999 Hull Time Based Arts, UK.

2006 Composer-in-Residence, Schloss Wiepersdorf, Brandenburg, Germany.

Selected Bibliography:

- LEONARDO, Vol.28, No.2, pp.93-97,1995, Audio Jackets and Other Electroacosutic Clothes.
- BENOIT MAUBREY/ DIE AUDIO GRUPPE, catalog 1985.
- Die Audio Gruppe 1982-1998, catalog 1989.
- PERFORMANCES WITH ELECTROACOUSTIC CLOTHES, DVD 2007.
- KLANG und BEWEGUNG, Berichte aus der Musikwissenschaft, Shaker Verlag ISBN 3-8322-2270-7
- Techno Textiles: Revolutionary Fabrics for Fashion and Design (9780500280966): Sarah E. Braddock, Marie O'Mahony.

Workshops / Guest artist lectures:

Oberlin College, Concordia University, Johns Hopkins University, Virginia Commonwealth University, Dresden Academy of Arts , Academy of Arts Enschede, Simon Fraser University, George Washington University, MIT Media Lab, IDEA Center Colorado College.