

GERALD TRIMMEL

disPLAY

The multidimensional name *disPLAY* was given to the electrogenetic digital composition of language made up of seven *modules*: 1.intrusion, 2.tie lines, 3.do not disturb, 4.blind operator, 5.broker's call, 6.control and override, 7.music on hold. The technical capabilities of the compact disc medium comply with the modular character of the piece by turning it into a quasi-open system due to the deliberate programming of the sequence: the interchangeability of single elements allows the recipient to intervene in the macrostructure of the piece. The course of intensity and current is changed by the rearrangement of the modules.

The composer is guiding the listener through soundscapes formed by language. Sound is regarded as ready-made and thus constitutes, in its respective basic structure, the elementary building block of the assemblage. Yet this landscaping process is not foreseeable in terms of an exact principle that will allow to predetermine a point in the line of the melody. The particular encounter with sound in this landscape demands the acceptance of

surprise and an openness for the given in all its bizarreness.

In *disPLAY* Gerald Trimmel not only made use of the human voice, but he also comprised the sound-aspect of communication in its most extensive sense: phonetic communication from the animal kingdom has been included as well as the sounds of technological means of communication, for example those of printers, telefax-machines, or a working perculator's *talk*.

In the process of the composition such elements of language are released from their original communicative function by various methods. Substitution, permutation, deletion, and addition formed the first steps of alienation; to this a manifold filtering was added; finally, an interpolation of single languages ensued: sounds of one origin were connected with those of another in a fashion which is somehow reminiscent of serial music. The seamless flow of music is formed by parts of human, animal, and technical sounds of communication.

A next step of alienation was performed with a Vocoder. In the telecommunication of human language this device separates single signals from which the initially sent message is synthesized upon reception. For *disPLAY* the Vocoder becomes an instrument of transformation. Instead of reconstituting the transmitted signals into human voice again the composer modulates them with animal or technical language material by putting in the adequate substitution signals.

Another characteristic element of the composition waives the basic fluctuation of the genuine articulatory entirety of sound. Single words were stretched: through retardation of the habitual speed of sound the composer is dealing with the overtone-structure as if looking at it with a magnifying lens and thus uncovers structures usually hidden in the quick flow of language. The surface of the sound-material is showing holes which indicate the emptiness behind it, the silence which is inherent to sound.

The process of composition transformed comprehensible language that can be assigned to meaning into an artistic meta-language. Alienation and combination created an archetypal tonal means of sound through which the composer is talking to the receiver. Sound or combination of sounds have stopped being concrete vehicles of meaning. They no longer mediate concepts, but only themselves as that what they are. Understanding a composition like *disPLAY* requires accepting the musical qualities of sounds and noises as such. Decoding thus becomes an esthetic rather than an intellectual process.

Volker Zotz

Translated by Urbana Krieger

