SYSTEMA NATURAE
For instruments and electromechanical devices
MAURO LANZA / ANDREA VALLE

SCHALLFELD ENSEMBLE
The cycle Systema Naturae includes four pieces. Its main feature is the use of acoustic instruments together with computer controlled physical objects placed in a specific spatial organization. Two references are at the base of the whole cycle. The first is the medieval, phantasmagoric tradition of bestiaria, herbaria and lapidaria intended as multi-faceted catalogues of miscellaneous beings (animals, stones, plants). A second reference is taxonomy, the systematic description of living organisms that dates back to Linnaeus’ Systema Naturae (hence the name of the cycle) as the rationalistic ordering of nature. As a consequence, each piece is organized following the model of the catalogue, as a collection of short pieces receiving an invented latin name.

Regnum animale (2013)  
For string trio and electromechanical objects

Regnum vegetabile (2014)  
For sextet and electromechanical objects

Regnum lapideum (2016)  
For ensemble and electromechanical objects

Fossilia (2016/17)  
For ten musicians and electromechanical objects
Regnum animale features a string trio surrounded by an amass of devices built from discarded, scavenged every-day objects and appliances. The piece is a sequence of very short pieces, each one lasting approximately 40” and dedicated to an imaginary animal. In Regnum vegetabile the main reference from the plant regnum are cacti, green plants with wooden-like structures and animal-like jaws. Thus cacti well represent the many possibilities in which nature shapes its beings. The setup includes a sextet and 30 modified hair dryers that operate various wind instruments (recorders, harmonicas, toy trumpets, and so on).

Regnum lapideum is specifically based on percussive and plucked sources, both on the acoustic and the electromechanical side. Thus, the piece favours a metallic, percussive approach. Even if not a fourth kingdom in Linnaeus, fossils offer an interesting terminative notion for the cycle as they can be seen as a reduction to minerals of both animals and vegetables. This “fossil” mood is at the core of the piece, scored for all instruments and electromechanical devices. In this sense, Fossilia has to be played after the three Regna, as it needs not only all the musicians, but also all the three setups.
MAURO LANZA

Mauro Lanza was born in 1975 and studied piano in Venice and computer music at Ircam. Tinged with irony, his compositions have been, since the very beginning, the result of an ever increasing effort towards an intimate fusion of classical instruments with other less conventional sound sources (physical modelling synthesis, toy instruments, noisemakers and various specimens of objets trouvés). He enjoys the clarity and the inhuman character of formalized processes, working extensively with computer algorithms. In residence at the Villa Medici from 2007 to 2008, he has been on several other residences (Fresnoy; Civitella Ranieri; Akademie Schloss Solitude) and has undertaken various activities in the pedagogical domain (Ircam, McGill University, ESMUC, UdK). His music is published by Ricordi Milano. In 2014 he was awarded by Italy’s National Association of Music Critics with the Franco Abbiati Prize.

ANDREA VALLE

Andrea Valle, an electric bass player, was born in 1974 and studied composition with Azio Corghi. Since 2009 he has developed projects involving the computational control of physical objects, with a particular preference for common, discarded materials. His work also includes improvisation (with AMP2/IVVN collective and others), sound installations (Milan Design Week, Infart festival) and music for multimedia performances (he collaborates extensively with Marcelli Antúnez Roca). His music has been published by Die Schachtel, Nephogram, Ripples. He received a PhD in Semiotics from the University of Bologna, and he is a researcher at the University of Turin, where he teaches in the Performing Art programme (DAMS). In 2016 he will be guest professor at Hochschule für Musik Detmold. With Mauro Lanza, he co-composed Regnum animale and Regnum vegetabile.
Schallfeld Ensemble

Schallfeld is an international ensemble for contemporary music based in Graz. The group sparks the interest of its audience by its vivid virtuosity and refined chamber music sound, paired with interpretations that pay special attention to concert format, creating events that adapt to the specific venue while aiming for a new dimension of listening.

The ensemble was founded in 2013 by alumni of Klangforum Wien and composition students of Kunstuniversität Graz. It currently consists of musicians from 8 nationalities and reflects the diversity and different interests of its members in its artistic direction. In the last few years, Schallfeld has been able to establish itself on international stages through exciting programming with a focus on young composers, innovative concert-stagings as well as through the quality of its collective improvisations and innovative use of live-electronics.

Schallfeld sees its mission in bringing music of international young composers to Austria and acting as an ambassador for new music production abroad. Besides its own concert cycle in Graz, Schallfeld is regularly guest in festivals in Austria and abroad, such as Wien Modern, Impuls Graz, Klangspuren Schwaz, Darmstädter Ferienkurse, Afekt (Estonia), Poznan Musical Spring (Poland), EMA (Spain), Daegu International Contemporary Music Festival (South Korea).

In 2016 and 2017 Schallfeld has been selected by the Ministry of Foreign/cultural Affairs as representative of NASOM (New Austrian Sound of Music), a program designed to promote young Austrian artists internationally. The ensemble is also involved in pedagogical activities and collaborative theater projects for children and adults. Schallfeld is funded by the municipality of Graz, the federal state of Styria, the Austrian federal Government and receives generous support from the University of Music and Performing Arts Graz and the iem (Institute for Electronic Music and Acoustics) Graz. Past projects by Schallfeld have also received grants by the EU (Youth in Action), Music Austria (MICA) and KulturKontakt Austria.
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