

ACOUSMATRIX 3

Luc Ferrari

**Petite Symphonie
Strathoven
Presque rien avec filles
Hétérozygote**

BVHAAS
CD 9009 **ADD**

Luc Ferrari

1. **Petite symphonie intuitive pour un paysage de printemps** 1973 25'13"
2. **Strathoven** 1985 3'20"
3. **Presque rien avec filles** 1989 13'58"
4. **Hétérozygote** 1963|64 26'23"

Total duration: 68'54"

With thanks to 'La Muse en Circuit' and to the 'Institut National de l'Audiovisuel - Groupe de Recherches Musicales (INA-GRM)', where 'Hétérozygote' has been produced.

Produced by: **BV HAAST RECORDS**

Prinseneiland 99

1013 LN Amsterdam

tel: [0]20 - 23 97 99

fax: [0]20 - 24 35 34

bank account: NMB Amsterdam

69.67.15.600

Cover: painting by **Franz Deckwitz**

'Martian Landscape' (coll.Boehmer)

Cover design: **Jack Jacobs**

Design inside: **Jan Kees Visscher**

Photo: **J.C. Delepine**



INA GRM



Luc FERRARI was born on February 5, 1929. Between 1946 and 1948 he studied piano and composition at the École Normale de Versailles. Until 1950 he studied with Alfred Cortot and Arthur Honegger. Finally (1953/54) he joined the class of Olivier Messiaën where he studied modal theory. In 1958 he started his collaboration with the 'Groupe de Musique Concrète' (until 1966). Between 1958 and 1959 he assisted Pierre Schaeffer in founding the 'Groupe de Recherches Musicales'. Since that time he is engaged in several pedagogical and theoretical activities which lead to substantial analysis of the 'objet musical' and the techniques of producing electroacoustic music. The results were also worked out in a series of broadcasts for the French Radio. During the sixties he produced a series of television-films amongst which a film on Messiaën's 'Turangalila Symphony' and films about the rehearsing process of works by Varèse, Stockhausen, Messiaën and others.

Between 1964/65 he was Professor of composition at the Rheinische Musikschule, Cologne. Then (in 1966) he taught experimental music in Stockholm. After that he spent a year in Berlin. Between 1968/69 he was music director of the Cultural Center of Amiens. In 1972 he founded a little electronic studio 'Billig'. Hereafter he was appointed composition teacher at the Conservatory of Pantin (1978-1980). Finally, in 1982, Ferrari founded 'La Muse en Circuit', a studio for electroacoustic and radiophonic creation at Vanves, near Paris.

In 1987 Ferrari was awarded the Prix Italia for his 'symphonic tale' 'Et si toute entière maintenant'; in 1988 his radio-play 'Je me suis perdu ou labyrinthe-portrait' was awarded the Karl Sczuka price, followed by the 'Grand Prix National' for his entire work by the French Ministry of Culture. Recently the jury of the 'International Record Critics Award' (IRCA) chose Ferrari's symphonic composition 'Histoire du plaisir et de la désolation' and awarded it the 'Prix

International Serge et Olga Koussewitzky'. The record has been produced by Ferraris studio 'La Muse en Circuit' and 'Musique Francaise d'Aujourd'hui' (ADDA 581156) with the title 'Luc Ferrari matin et soir'.

Ferrari is one of the most important and original personalities of the history of French 'musique concrète'. In his early works (Étude aux accidents, Etudes aux sons tendus, 1958; Visage V, 1959; Tête et queue du dragon, 1959-1960) he already looked for ways to take the 'concrète' aspect of the recorded sound-material seriously. By this, he withdrew more and more from the 'classic' ideal of concrete music as modern autonomous concert music. With Hétérozygote, Ferrari conceived his first 'anecdotic' composition where realistic sounds are treated **as such**, contributing to an imaginary musical tale. This evolution was pursued until its most radical point in 'Presque rien ou le lever du jour au bord de la mer' (1967-1970), a tape composition which can be considered as a musical photography. Since then he has integrated elements of literature and (electro-acoustic or instrumental) music in several compositions, films and radio plays. His musical theater piece 'Journal intime' (1982) was staged with great succes at the 'Théâtre du Lierre' in Paris, november 1989. Though these self-reflexions are rather critical toward the the outer world and the composer himself, the piece shows the relativistic and humoristic attitudes of the composer. The works included in our CD present a survey on Ferrari's musical evolution and versatility on the field of electroacoustic music. (K.Boehmer)

'One day, in a hotel room in Italy, I fell and hit my head. It hurt a lot, but the thud I heard fascinated me so much, that it kept me from fainting.'

'The secret lies in the unmeasurable power of sounds, in the dramaturgy, which rocks the sounds on their rhythm... I love the sound that betrays small uncertainties...'

'We have forgotten the theme, or do we actually need one? Would it not be better if it remained hidden in the uncertain?'

(from: Luc Ferrari, I lost myself, or: Labyrinth Portrait)

'I have realized works which remove more or less from merely musical preoccupations. Some amongst them appeal to a meeting of different branches of what could be one single tree. The problem was to try to express ideas, feelings and passing intuitions through different means; to observe everyday affairs in all their realities, whether they are social, psychological or sentimental. This can manifest itself in texts, instrumental textures, electroacoustic compositions, reportings, films, theater plays etc.' *(Luc Ferrari)*

Petite Symphonie Intuitive pour un paysage de printemps

This piece of electroacoustic music is part of a series which could be called 'landscape music'. But in contrary of 'Presque rien ou le lever du jour au bord de la mer', where the landscape talked itself, here it is a traveler who discovers a landscape and who tries to call upon it as a *musical* landscape.

This leads me to talk about that discovery and about the way in which this landscape has surprised me. I had visited the gorges of the Tarn and even those who do not know this region can imagine that it is a violently and tortured place. The visitor is seized by the beauty and feels oppressed by the ravine at the very same moment.

I got the idea to take a small path which passes the river and climbs during some 10 dizzy kilometers towards the steep slope. After having climbed a last swirl, an entirely unexpected landscape opened before my eyes. It was sunset. Before me, a gigantic plateau widened with sweet curves and gentle valleys until the horizon, until the sun. The colours reached from the yellow of dried up grass to the mauve in the distance, passing by the black of the few small forests which accentuated the space. Nearly empty, the nature offered itself to the eye without any obstacle. You could see everything.

Later on, when I remembered this place and the feelings I had when I discovered it, I tried to compose a music which would be able to bring it back to life.

The 'Causse Méjean' is a high plateau of about 1000 meters altitude in the Massif Central. It is settled by distant and hardly visible farms; you could only see some shepherds who lead slowly their flock of sheep. I wanted to accentuate this solitary and diffuse human presence by fragments of conversations which I had with some of the shepherds. The human language is integrated into the musical texture; the sound of the voice means more than what is really said.

One shepherd said one day: '...I am never bored. I listen to the landscape. Sometimes I blow into my flute and I listen to the echo which talks to me...' While thinking of him, I used the flute and its echo in my music. *(Luc Ferrari)*

The **Petite Symphonie** has been composed in 1973/74 in a 2-track (stereo) version. This is the first disk recording of the piece.

Strathoven

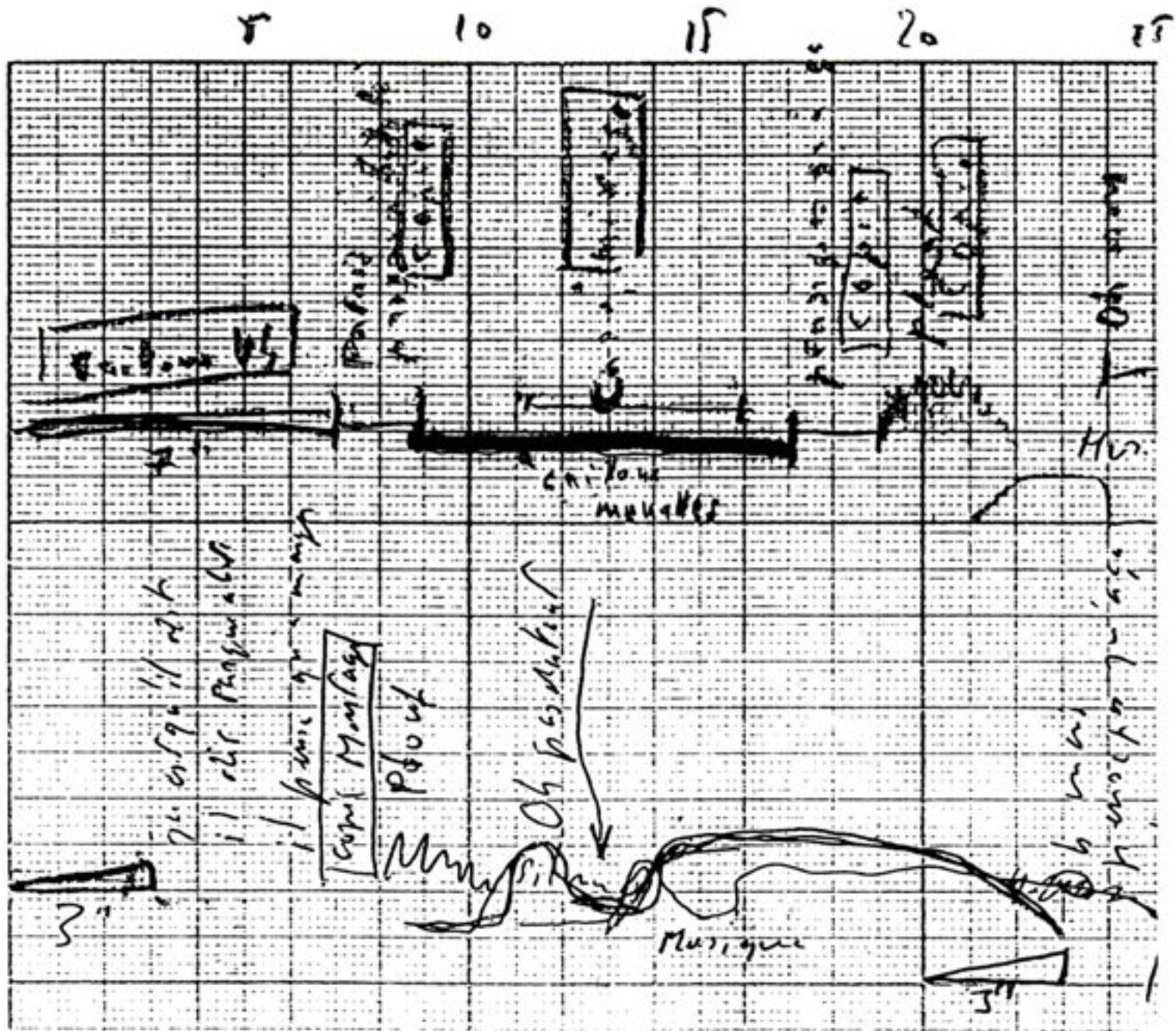
The spot is not the bar of a pub where two thieves meet before dinner, but it is a corner of a recording studio, where, in front of a mixing console and on two magnetic sound recorders, two persons, which have never met before, speak at the same moment. In this way Beethoven and Stravinsky have met.

In general, during concerts, they are supposed to talk one behind the other, but here, in the studio, they happen by chance to talk simultaneously and to use nearly the same words. I wanted to respect their speeches, and I am grateful for their friendly collaboration. *(Luc Ferrari)*

Strathoven was composed in 1985 in a stereo-version. This is the first disk recording of the piece.

Presque rien avec filles could be called the 'Presque rien number three' because it has been composed ten years after the number two which has been composed ten years after the number one. As in all things which are not set up in a systematic way, it will be difficult to discover a system into this series and I do not intend to construct a theory. If I say: 'Presque rien avec filles' is nearly not a 'Presque rien' (nearly nothing), one risks almost to get lost. Well, I emit images, but more in the form of an empty frame which has to be filled in by listening. A Tuscan landscape, an Alsatian forest, girls passing afar. And the rest is my secret. *(Luc Ferrari)*

When Ferrari conceived **Hétérozygote** in 1963/64, he was on tour as a film-producer. During his travels he recorded lots of acoustical 'documents': fragments of conversations, sounds and noises from nature and daily life, parts of interviews, etc. These fragments are mixed up in *Hétérozygote*, but they do not constitute a radio-play or a plot. They only suggest possible stories without developing them. On itself the integration of 'concrete' sounds into a piece of electroacoustic music was not new at that time. The composers of the classical French 'musique concrète' had done the same thing, but there the recorded sound was modulated and transformed in such a way that it became an abstract 'musical' sound. In Ferrari's piece the sounds maintain their 'natural' character which moves the composition out of the fields of 'absolute' music. *Hétérozygote* nevertheless is not a piece of literature: it goes back and forth between different forms of expression and by this way approaches reality in a way which no form of art could do on itself. This approach leaves a lot to the fantasy of the listener who is implicated in an active way. In Ferrari's musical evolution *Hétérozygote* stands for a turning point: since that composition, Ferrari moves more and more from the traditions of music as an 'abstract' art developing it into an actively participating element of human reality. (*Konrad Boehmer*)



Luc Ferrari, from **Hétérozygote** (1963/64)