

LUC FERRARI

PIANO &
PERCUSSION
WORKS

SATOKO INOUE

TOSHIYUKI MATSUKURA

The inventor of *musique anecdotique* [anecdotal music] or composer of the legendary piece “Presque rien No.1” [Almost Nothing], a condensed acoustic portrayal of daybreak on the Dalmatian coast – as he is known by official music history. But wait! That’s only one aspect, for among composers Luc Ferrari was a chameleon. He was never part of a compositional school, never pursued any kind of “stylistically pure aesthetics”. Ferrari was trained in serial music, he not only composed for traditional instruments but also produced tape pieces and wrote film scores and radio plays. And in the late 1990s he also attempted something that he had avoided for a long time: live improvisations based on conceptual outlines. His musical partners were improvisers, e.g. the e-guitarist Noël Akchoté, laptop musicians or experimental DJs, e.g. DJ Olive and eRikm. But Ferrari never considered this curiosity and flexibility an assimilation of new styles or a modification of his own positions. Unlike for instance his former companion from the early days of electronic music in Paris, Pierre Henry, he never turned into a “pop” musician or “techno DJ” – even though in his final years he definitely achieved a decent reputation in the club scene, albeit more along experimental lines. With indefatigable inventiveness, with humour, flexibility and a deep passion for the new, Ferrari adhered to a couple of basic concepts throughout his entire life as a composer. In doing so the principle of open form became the compositional element which probably runs through nearly his entire oeuvre. Ferrari

always asked the players to become directly involved, to participate in the creative process. Though he formulated structures and instructions, the scores always include passages that give players the freedom to choose their action within bounds. Thus, his move to improvisation is logical: as an old man he did not adapt himself to the style of young people or improvise out of helplessness.

It’s not a contradiction to call Ferrari a flexible thinker of open form and revere him as the master of *musique anecdotique*, an idiosyncratic variant of *musique concrète* he developed from 1958 onwards when he was working in Schaeffer’s studio. At that time a characteristic feature of his creative personality was already becoming apparent. Although Ferrari – just like Schaeffer and Pierre Henry, another pioneer of the 1950s movement *musique concrète* – acoustically explored everyday life and also used tape recordings of the “concrete” sounds of daily life and the technical world to create new soundscapes through modulation and editing techniques, he did not see himself as a kind of scientific explorer of found sound the way Schaeffer did. Fascinated by the playful creativity of sonic experimentation, Ferrari e.g. was looking for ways to use the new technological developments to produce acoustic spatial illusions. While Schaeffer aimed at composing pure abstract music and at perceiving and composing sound as abstract noise by veiling the origin of the sound material with all its semantic associations, Ferrari took the opposite path. Instead of transferring

the material into the realm of abstraction, Ferrari offers ambiguous listening; he virtually appeals to the listener's associative, visual or narrative imagination. From this perspective one understands how Ferrari can be the thinker of open form *and* the master of concrete sounds at the same time. To him, *both* are products of abstract thinking *and* likewise anchored in the real world – and finally, he even transfers the idea of open form to listening to his anecdotal music.

Ferrari was already an experienced composer when he began working with concrete sounds in 1958. The two early pieces, which are included on this CD as premiere recordings to reach a wider audience, give insight into his stylistic orientation before the time of his re-orientation. Whereas “Sonatine Elyb” (1953), though already inspired by serial principles, still clearly exhibits expressionist qualities, “Visage I”, composed after Ferrari first attended the Darmstädter Ferienkurse [Darmstadt International Summer Courses], is much more committed to the contemporary avant-garde concepts of serialism, although Ferrari didn't follow them very strictly. Ferrari had studied composition with Arthur Honegger, whose “Pacific 237” had impressed him greatly. Meeting Edgard Varèse in 1953 resulted in his first re-orientation, which became more radical when Ferrari took analysis classes with Messiaen and came to the Mecca of new music, the International Summer Courses in Darmstadt, where he met Stockhausen, Nono, Boulez, Pousseur, and Cage. As a young composer, Luc Ferrari had thus found his way into the sphere of influence of four

strong currents: the sound cosmos of Edgar Varèse, serialism, musique concrète, and John Cage's ideas of open structures. Listening to “Cellule 75”, one notices immediately that it would be wrong to classify Ferrari as merely a champion of musique concrète or *musique anecdotique*. Written in 1975, the piece combines tape and live instrumental sounds and thus demonstrates that Ferrari was trying to find a synthesis and combine musical ideas. From a sound or motivic cell Ferrari builds a whole cosmos, integrating US-American minimal music models only to immediately deconstruct and then re-assemble them. Repetitions of short piano motifs are complemented by the percussionist – not continuous and meticulously planned machine-like changes but permutations, deletions and superimpositions characterise “Celulle 75”. Unforeseen twists in the repetitive pattern divide the work into three larger parts, which are linked by short tape solos, with the instrumentalists blending into the taped sounds after a certain time. Here, Luc Ferrari transfers his idea of an anecdotal music from tape compositions into instrumental music: repetitive patterns and repeated environmental sounds (the roar of the surf and chirping birds as reference to the rhythms of nature or machine loops as man-made ambient noises) are confronted with various repetitive patterns in the music, from minimal music gestures to a clearly audible groove, to associations with traditional hiking songs. Tape and instruments eventually come together in recognisable march gestures. “Conversation intime” is a dialogue between two

instruments (or instrumentalists) about a wide array of musical “themes” – there are vague stylistic references, associations with past musical spaces. At times there is direct interplay, now and then the two instrumentalists complement the individual motivic cells of the other one. Here, too, there is an ironic floating through the idioms.

Satoko Inoue is an experienced performer of Ferrari’s works and had a lively exchange of ideas with the composer, who was also present at the recording sessions. No wonder then that precisely those ideas of open work and its “anecdotal” interpretation were the ones that were most important to him – as such sounds were to him always abstract at the core, even if he first illustrated them in a very visual and associative way. Satoko Inoue writes: “We discussed, he explained about each section. Luc had really specific images and meanings of his music materials. For example, he said ‘The sounds of this section are the noises of machines. Please imagine the noises of a big factory. So, please perform the piano like ... This phrase came from the *écriture* of military music, and in this section, the phrase becomes distorting, ...’ and so on. But please don’t misunderstand. Indeed he showed me so specific images and meanings of each material in his works, but he never showed me any kind of literary or philosophic meanings.”

Nina Polaschegg, June 2008

translated by Friederike Kulcsar

Satoko Inoue (pianist)

Pianist Satoko Inoue is renowned throughout Japan, Europe and in the United States as a leading interpreter of contemporary solo piano music. She has premiered works by some of Japan’s foremost composers including Jo Kondo, Yori-aki Matsudaira, Yorisune Matsudaira, Toshi Ichiyanagi, and Yuji Itoh. She is also known for performing works of other contemporary composers such as Toru Takemitsu, John Cage, Morton Feldman, Henry Cowell, Luciano Berio, Giacinto Scelsi, Luc Ferrari, Doina Rotaru, and others.

Since 1991 every year, Ms. Inoue has been presenting the solo piano series “Satoko Plays Japan” at major venues in that country. She has performed over a hundred contemporary pieces in this well-respected series. Before this she was the pianist with Musica Practica Ensemble Tokyo, a leading Japanese ensemble which introduced many important pieces of new music to Japan. She is a post-graduate of Tokyo Gakugei University.

Besides performing in Japan, Satoko Inoue has appeared at major European festivals including Darmstadt, the International Experimental Music Festival in Bourges, ISCM in Romania, and at Japan Year (Germany) in 1999. In addition, she had a lot of solo concerts in US, Germany, France, Italy, Turkey, Romania, and Egypt. She has recorded two solo CDs on HatHut Records -- “Japan Piano ‘96” and “Jo Kondo Works for Piano”, and has also the CD “Satoko Plays Mieko Shiomi” on the German label Edition Hundertmark.

Besides concertizing, Ms. Inoue is Associate Professor of Kunitachi College of Music in Tokyo.

Toshiyuki Matsukura (percussionist)

After graduation from Tokyo University of Arts (department of music), Toshiyuki Matsukura completed a post-graduated school. While at university he was awarded Ataka Prize. In 1980 he won second prize at Concours International pour L’interprétation de la Musique Contemporaine (Percussion) in Paris. Since 1972 he has been a regular member of

“Percussion Group 72”, in Tokyo, having 22 concerts until now. Besides he took part in “Musica Practica Ensemble” till 1990, and now he is a member of “Tokyo Sinfonietta”. As the percussionist of these groups, he played at “ISCM in Athens in 1979”, and participated in many concerts in France, Germany, Austria, Spain, Sweden, and Venezuela. Now Mr. Matsukura is a professor at Oita Prefectural College of Arts and Culture, and teaches at the Elisabeth University of Music, too.

Thank you! Whether this is your first recording from Hat Hut Records, or your Xth, we want you to know how proud we are to have you as a member of our growing, world-wide community of listeners. We hope that you enjoy this recording; it represents our constant aim to bring you the music of the future to discover. What you hear is what you hear.

Werner X. Uehlinger

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LUC FERRARI (1929–2005)

PIANO & PERCUSSION WORKS

SATOKO INOUE *piano* & TOSHIYUKI MATSUKURA *percussion*

1 **Conversation Intime** (octobre 1987 – mars 1988) 19:33

Pour piano et percussion

ISRC 130.0900562

First recording

2 **Visage I** (1956) 7:21

ISRC 130.0900563

Sonatine Elyb pour piano (1953–54)

3 **Allegretto** 2:50

ISRC 130.0900564

4 **Adagio** 1:55

ISRC 130.0900565

5 **Andante-Allegro subito** 2:52

ISRC 130.0900566

First recording

6 **Cellule 75 – Force du rythme et cadence forcée** (mai – novembre 1975) 32:45

Pour piano, percussions et bande magnétique

ISRC 130.0900567

Total Time DDD ²⁴**Bit** 67:37

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