

The Hum Blog

 **Menu**

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on luc ferrari's complete music for films 1960-1984, via sub rosa



Luc Ferrari

COMPLETE MUSIC FOR FILMS 1960-1984

Luc Ferrari – *Complete Music For Films 1960-1984* (2017)

Within the history of avant-garde and experimental electronic music, there are few names as significant as Luc Ferrari – a towering figure of musical Modernism, who elevated the field to unforeseen heights. Ferrari trained as a classical pianist under Alfred Cortot, while studying theory under Olivier Messiaen and composition with Arthur Honegger – an incredible pedigree, before shifting his interests toward magnetic tape and electronics following an encounter with Edgard Varèse's *Déserts*. Between the late 1950s and 1966, he collaborated extensively within Groupe de Musique Concrète, concurrently founding Groupe de Recherches Musicales with Pierre Schaeffer in 1958 – a collective and studio which holds a singular and iconic place within the history of avant-garde electronic music.

Ferrari's work between the late 50's and his death in 2005 is stunning. There are few parallels within the same period. Strikingly diverse in process and application, his music is filled with a belief in the importance of all sound, and the avant-garde's potential to effect positive change on everyday life. While Ferrari never suffered for recognition – he is among the most famous composers of his era,

certain threads of his output have been largely overlooked, most notable his efforts for film. Sub Rosa's latest release, a three-CD set gathering the composer's complete works for films, created between 1960-1984, begins to unwind this sin, shining light onto this largely unexplored body of work.

Complete Music For Films 1960-1984 represents a startling diverse, not to mention incredible, body of work, including electronic pieces, concrete music made at Groupe de Recherches Musicales, and electroacoustic hybrids involving traditional instruments. Ferrari, like many members of GRM, was particularly dedicated to creating music for theatre, television, and film – drawn to the democratic possibilities for distribution and access, activated by these mediums. Unfortunately, until now, his output in these areas has been almost entirely overlooked due to lack of availability. Most of the recording which occupy the three CDs of *Complete Music For Films 1960-1984* are incredibly rare and have remained unpublished since their creation, including his seminal collaborations with Jean Cocteau and Jean Tinguely, included within. As a totality, this body of work rises as one of great lost bodies of Musical Modernism, activating a window into upon the many hopes and optimisms of another era – a rippling body of philosophy, executed through organized sound.

Complete Music For Films 1960-1984 falls within the already incredible catalog of Sub Rosa. (<https://www.subrosa.net/en.html>) Over the last decade, the Belgium based imprint has risen among the most ambitious ventures in recorded sound, issuing a stream of rare artifacts from the history avant-garde and experimental practice, offering particular dedicated to the history of electronic, electroacoustic music within their *Early Electronic* (<https://www.subrosa.net/en/catalogue/early-electronic-music.html?jsessionid=C5BF28FF9BBA4A53D5FE1A4C1C9603C0>) series, to which this collection belongs. *Complete Music For Films 1960-1984* is no exception to the label's already high bar – absolutely essential for any fan of 20th century music, electronic practice, synthesis, Musique Concrete, or Soundtracks. Offering a multifaceted window in Ferrari creative and intellectual world, the set is accompanied by two texts by Philippe Langlois and Guillaume Contré, rare photographs from films, and handwritten notes by Ferrari. It should also be noted that for €15, it would be hard to find a better bang for your buck. You can check it out below, and pick it up from Sub Rosa (<https://www.subrosa.net/en/catalogue/early-electronic-music/luc-ferrari-complete-music-for-films-1960-1984.html>), SoundOhm (<http://www.soundohm.com/product/complete-music-for-films-1960-1984/pid/30036/>), or a record shop near you.

-Bradford Bailey



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