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Band 84

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ELEKTROAKUSTISCHE MUSIK – TECHNOLOGIE, ÄSTHETIK UND THEORIE ALS HERAUSFORDERUNG AN DIE MUSIKWISSENSCHAFT

ELECTROACOUSTIC MUSIC – TECHNOLOGIES, AESTHETICS, AND THEORIES – A MUSICOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

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On the paradigmatic behaviour of sound-based music

LEIGH LANDY, Leicester

This talk starts with an anecdote of symbolic importance in the form of a question: Where does one place an electroacoustic CD in a CD shop? In general, with the possible exception of our mega-CD shops, it is 'hit or miss' in terms of finding this corpus in a non-ambiguous place. In fact it is more miss than hit; when such a CD is available, it might be hidden under classical music, electronica (under pop), an instrument being used or under the (possibly relatively unknown) composer's name in alphabetical order. In short, for someone wanting to browse through the repertoire, it is unlikely that this opportunity is on offer. Clearly, the Internet offers an alternative, but again, without previous knowledge, finding something of interest is probably non-trivial. This all boils down to the word combination: access to and the accessibility of electroacoustic music.

Terminology

The state of terminology related to electroacoustic music is a subject I have had to return to often in recent years. To be honest, a bit of flexibility in terminology can be useful; however, the state of our key terms is awkward to put it mildly. Let us look at a few of the most often used terms related to classification and see what I mean by this.[1]

• *Organised Sound*: We all know where this term came from, Edgard Varèse, who felt dissatisfied with the word 'music' describing his pre-electroacoustic compositions. One can easily understand what he was driving at, not least the ability that all sounds can be used in music. However there are two issues here:

   1 does this imply that the term *organised sound* is to replace music? and

   2 what did Varèse actually mean when he coined the term?

I believe that, perhaps with the exception of the Brussels performance of his *Poème Électronique*, he meant works involving sound organisation that can be presented within a musical context such as a concert. John Cage, on the other hand, gladly borrowed this term but took a much more liberationist approach to its meaning. His often repeated: "Music is all around us, if only we had ears …"

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[1] The following terminology discussion draws largely on my talk given at the EMS06 conference in Beijing entitled "Electroacoustic Music Studies and Accepted Terminology: You can't have the one without the other". This talk can be found at: http://www.ems-network.org/article.php3?id_article=242, visited 19.11.07.

implies that we can take our concerts with us, as everything we hear is organised sound and thus music. Let's deal with a specific case, an interactive sound installation in a public space. People who are willing, come into the installation area and 'play it'. What one hears is organised sound. But is it also music? According to Varèse, possibly not; according to Cage, absolutely. This term has offered us two awkward problems, but things will get worse.

• *Sonic Art*: On the EARS site[2], Sonic Art is defined as follows: "this term generally designates the art form in which the sound is its basic unit". From my personal point of view, this is exactly what I am involved with as a composer. But here again there are problems, four this time:

   1 where do acoustic works fit here? This is actually not problematic in terms of this or the next term, but it is certainly so with electroacoustic music;

   2 what is the difference between sonic art and sound art? I shall comment on this in a moment;

   3 do all languages offer an adequate equivalent of this term? The answer is no. Just to give two examples, *Klangkunst* in German means and most often refers to sound art. *L'art sonore* is not used that often in French due to the historical fact that *les arts sonores* means music and is placed alongside *les arts scèniques* (performing arts) and *les arts plastiques* (fine art);

   4 last but by no means least, is sonic art music? Different people will have different answers to this question. Sonic art is a term I would be comfortable with were it to include the word music as I am very much influenced by John Cage as far as organised sound is concerned and do not believe in separating sonic art from music, something that is even controversial in terms of the next term.

• *Sound Art*: This term is used in a variety of manners, but I can say that the key concept behind sound art is that it refers to works of sound organisation that are normally not conceived for concert performance. They can be found in galleries, museums, in public spaces, on the radio or wherever, but they are normally not presented as musical works. There are, of course, historical reasons for this. Sound artworks tend not to have a beginning or an end. Many choosing this term, but by no means all, have studied fine art and are making an art of sound. But how different is this compared with the sonic arts? (Indeed, here is another problem; sonic art also appears in its plural form.) I think that this boils down to intention: sound art is usually an art with an implied context, again normally not a concert hall. Sonic art works may be played anywhere including the concert hall.

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[2] This refers to the ElectroAcoustic Resource Site also known as EARS that is hosted by the Music, Technology and Innovation Research Centre at De Montfort University where I work: www.ears.dmu.ac.uk, visited 19.11.07.

Let's put it this way for the moment; sound art is, in my view, a subset of sonic art. Beware, however, there are those who believe that sound artists are people who do not qualify to be musicians. I personally have great difficulty with this view.

• *Electronic Music*: Many people use this word as a synonym for electroacoustic music, particularly in the US. This is somewhat odd in my view, as a soundscape composition, for example, which may involve subtle sound manipulation, but does not normally involve any electronic generation, would fit under this category. Electronic music also has an historical connotation when used in German, *elektronische Musik*. Electronic music means electroacoustic music in which sounds are generated electronically (synthesised) to most people in my circles.

• *Musique Concrète/Acousmatic Music, L'Art des Sons Fixés, etc.*: Often misunderstood to be music using concrete sounds (this was not Pierre Schaeffer's original reason for using this term), *musique concrète* has often been placed in opposition to *elektronische Musik* as one involved sound generation and the other did not. We acquire an understanding of what Schaeffer meant by this term by reading his theories on the subject including his views concerning so-called reduced listening. This limitation was so important to Schaeffer that one of his own protégés, Luc Ferrari, left the Parisian studios when he started to compose what he would call 'anecdotal music', that is, music for heightened listening using highly identifiable sound sources. Later other composers chose the term *acousmatic music* above *musique concrète*. A battle between those two terms continues, at least in francophone nations. In fact there are at least three other terms participating in this particular wrestling match. Fortunately, many musicians have moved beyond this and believe that all sounds can be used in an electroacoustic work and therefore the original French/German separation is long redundant. I believe that *musique concrète's* purpose was slightly defeated by the theory of its originator; *acousmatic music* is a nice description of audio works on a fixed medium; it is only useful, however, in terms of classifying today's compositions that celebrate Schaefferian ideals.

• *Electroacoustic Music*: Definitions of this term vary greatly. Some believe that it refers solely to music on a fixed medium; many believe that it only refers to art music. I see the term as one that "refers to any music in which electricity has had some involvement in sound registration and/or production other than that of a simple microphone or amplification".[3] This, of course, includes relevant forms of music with roots in popular music traditions. I would perhaps qualify this further by saying that where the above description is not the major focus in a given piece one can speak of using electroacoustic techniques; where it is the primary focus one speaks of electroacoustic music. I shall use the term in this manner from now

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[3] www.ears.dmu.ac.uk, visited 19.11.07.

on. The Canadians call this music and its studies *Electroacoustics*. This has not caught on very much outside the country but does relate the work involved with music making alongside scholarly research, which is intriguing. There is another question that is worth thinking about: How does electroacoustic music differ from sonic art? Clearly sonic art may involve acoustic works, so that is one point. Another is that there are electroacoustic works that fully adhere to the definition, but do not necessarily focus on sounds in the sense used here, but instead focus more specifically on timbral aspects of notes. Such works probably do not belong to sonic art. Yet the two terms are often used interchangeably. The Sonic Arts Network in the UK works happily with other nations' electroacoustic music organisations. Then there's –

• *Electronica*: Although of reasonably recent vintage, different groups use this term in very different ways. For many in pop music circles, it is used as a synonym for electroacoustic music although when one digs a bit deeper writers tend to disagree with each other about what belongs to each term and which genres fit together. In contrast, for those involved in recent laptop performance, just to name one example, and who adhere to concepts associated with Glitch, Electronica is what they make. However this music hardly fits into most pop musicians' usage of the term. There is little to no overlap here. Similarly in French *Électro* may mean any electroacoustic music or those rooted particularly in popular traditions. I tend to class much of the above within electroacoustic music, but am intrigued to see how, in five years' time, this term will be used.

• *Computer Music*: Of all the terms here, this is the only one I would really like to see disappear in the not too distant future. *Computer music* is a term relating to many disparate communities ranging from electroacoustic music to audio engineering to cognition (whose specialists are not terribly interested thus far in electroacoustic music as an object of study) to people creating analyses, traditionally notated scores and computer-based compositions for instruments. The programme of the annual International Computer Music Conference illustrates this well.

Where does all of this leave us? It takes little imagination to see how these terms – and the various definitions relating to these terms – relate to/overlap with one another. It may therefore seem odd to note that I am not particularly happy with any of these terms. *Electroacoustic music* has those two disadvantages in terms of my interest, sound organisation. *Sonic art*, on the other hand, does not. However, the use of the word 'art' provides an incentive for many to disqualify this work as music. Again, I have difficulty with this.

So what does one do? I think the answer to this is two-fold. First I have decided in my recent writings to be bold and reject all of these terms for the music I am involved with and choose a new one. This may come across as highly egotistical,

but I see no other way. I believe that the definition, or something close to the definition related to sonic art needs to be used with a term that includes the word, music and because of this, I have come up with a new term, *Sound-based Music*[4] as it is clear. I have defined this word as follows: "the art form in which the sound, that is, not the musical note, is its basic unit".[5] I have admitted that those who prefer the Varèse view of organised sound to Cage's need not accept this new concept as sonic art may work well for them, but there is still that problem concerning the term's inability to be translated easily. For clarity, I have suggested that, in English, *Sound-based Music Studies*[6] be used as the name for the scholarly field related to this diverse corpus of music.

Co-hear-ence

Having found a name for the body of musical work in which I am interested, the following questions seem pertinent: how does one best formulate how the various types of music associated with sound-based music fit together? Similarly, how does the associated field of studies fit together? By finding means to answer these two questions, one may very well be taking two important steps towards understanding key relationships concerning this musical corpus.

The EARS site, given the fact that it has the word, electroacoustic as part of its abbreviation and given the fact that some sound-based music goes beyond that which fits under electroacoustic music, contains genres and categories names that fit within either or both. What has been of interest in terms of selection has been two things. Firstly, where does one draw the line defining what fits and what does not? Does one include items that employ electroacoustic or sound-based techniques but are not primarily either the one or the other? Thus far we have been cautious and chosen ca. eighty terms that we believe do fit within this broad area. The next question is even trickier: how do we fit these terms together? The EARS site traditionally contains a nesting approach for the presentation of its terms within the site's index. In 2006 it was decided to drop this nesting approach when discussing genres and category terms due to the fact that some terms were being nested under too many other ones. Furthermore, important well-known terms appeared at lower levels than smaller terms that could only appear at the highest level. Currently EARS simply lists these terms alphabetically.

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[4] I suggest *die Musik der Klänge* as a reasonable German translation; it has already been translated in French as *La musique des sons*.

[5] This definition first appeared in: Leigh Landy, *Understanding the Art of Sound Organization*, Cambridge, Mass. 2007, p. 17.

[6] It should be noted briefly that this field of studies concerns the corpus of music and its related field of studies primarily and involves technology and technological application when discussed in terms of its serving musical goals.

However, new semantic web approaches, new thinking in the world of ontologies allows us to think in terms of clusters of musical genres and categories. It is our intention to introduce this approach of clustering in the near future to assist in creating what I call 'co-hear-ence', that is coherence from the point of view of the listening experience.

Similar to the terminology debate that was introduced above, genres and category terminology also poses great problems. Looking at the terms listed under this section of the EARS site, many fall under one or more of the following: means of formalisation, a technique, some form(s) of technology, sound generation, choice of venue or terms that are simply quite general. In almost all of these cases, the EARS terms represent categories, not genres. Few terms are related to the listening experience in any way. In fact sound-based music seems to have been responsible for the creation of very few genre terms, a curious state of affairs.

With this in mind, an alternative means of classifying works is needed alongside a discussion by interested parties to investigate how one may offer a more efficient, agreed vocabulary in the not too distant future. I shall offer a classification model for sound-based music later on in this paper.

As the concept of sound-based music studies is new, we also need to consider what this field's framework might look like. As I have often written, the term musicology seems not to be too popular amongst people involved with sound-based music, at least in Anglophone nations. This meeting hosted by a musicological institute forms a welcome exception. This is due, at least in part, to the fact that musicology has had great difficulty in engaging with this radical musical addition. It is not that many of the musicological approaches are not *à propos* or that the associated fields of study are more pertinent to the music of notes than the music of sounds. It is simply a waiting game to see where this body of music will turn up on the map of the arts, I believe. It is for this reason that I have opted to use the term, sound-based music studies. That said, on the EARS site, the section called Musicology of Electroacoustic Music suggests that musicological areas be placed at the heart of electroacoustic and sound-based music studies. A great deal of work has been done on the EARS site to create a framework for sound-based music studies. A very quick summary is provided directly after the introduction of the system for classifying sound-based music below.

Given the fact that the organisation of genre terminology is a non-trivial operation and the realisation that the field of studies is, to a large extent, in its infancy, that is, much work has been done but too little work has been done to:

a) create a solid foundation for this field, and

b) tie the work that has been done into a coherent entity,

this leads to the conclusion that it is no wonder that a great deal of sound-based music is relatively unknown in society today and thus deserves a better lot. The suggestion that a paradigm for sound-based music might exist and the consequences of its acceptance just might help a good deal of the music being lifted out of the margins.

The paradigm

Having already used the word, access, above, a word that is accused of being trendy if not overused, I shall now introduce a second term that has been similarly been accused of overuse, paradigm. In preparing the book on which this talk is largely based[7], I found three citations related to paradigm. Let's start with the one that supports the above-mentioned accusation: "No word says 'phoney intellectual' as well as when you use paradigm".[8] The man whose name is inseparable from the word, paradigm, Thomas Kuhn has described the word as the predominant worldview in the realm of human thought.[9] No one would contest this thought, but it does make our search concerning sound-based music seem too modest to qualify. Therefore, a more appropriate final statement has been chosen that is most useful for the current discussion: "An abstract structure, of some tenure, in which knowledge is related within a given realm."[10] Although this last statement may sound a bit tautological, my assumption is that these knowledge relationships are significant.

I would also like to suggest that sound-based music equally be considered to be what I call a 'supergenre'. I define this word as follows: "A class bringing together a cluster of genres and categories often considered as being separate that have been converging in recent years due to their use of materials and the knowledge concerning the artistic use of these materials".[11] This assumption allows me to pursue this corpus of music and its related field of studies as belonging to a paradigm. Now all that is left is for me to attempt to demonstrate this.

To do so I must now put on my intellectual boxing gloves and enter the ring with François Delalande who, in 2001, developed his notion of the *electroacoustic music paradigm*.[12] Let us start with a brief description of his notion and then allow me to attempt to demonstrate why a sound-based music paradigm might make more sense. Delalande's view is basically that music has known three

7   Leigh Landy, *La musique des sons/The Music of Sounds*, Paris 2007.
8   www.microwaves101.com/encyclopedia/writingstyle.cfm, visited 19.11.07.
9   Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago 1996.
10 www.geocities.com/CapitalHill/1284/glossdef.html; This definition was found at this Internet address in November 2006, but has been removed in mid-2007.
11 Leigh Landy, *Understanding the Art of Sound Organization*, p. xi.
12 François Delalande, *Le Son des Musiques entre Technologie et esthétique*, Paris 2001.

'technological paradigms', namely, that of aural tradition, written notations and the studio-based electroacoustic paradigm. This final and most recent addition assumes that one is working in a non-real-time studio environment, something unknown in terms of earlier forms of music making. In *The Music of Sounds* I make a case against Delalande's logical concept based on three key arguments:

1 There is an issue concerning the content of electroacoustic music as has already been presented above. Some electroacoustic works, although they are involved with the elaboration of timbre, are quite note-based. Think, for example of many early German electronic works and those of some of the composers associated with the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center. There are composers today who work in a similar manner, making electroacoustic note-based works. I personally find that these works belong more to what one might call a *note-based music paradigm* than that of a *sound-based music paradigm*. I, for one, am certain that a note-based music paradigm exists based on our working definition. I, therefore, do not consider the means of production a sufficient for paradigmatic behaviour and, in fact, would suggest that the listening experience must also be included. If one is only interested in production, perhaps Delalande's argument deserves support. However, there is a related to be raised here.

2 As Delalande is looking at production as the foundation of his paradigm, I cannot understand why other new media that use similar protocols of montage and the like are not also included, such as video and today's digital equivalent.

3 The third objection concerns the focus on the studio and non-real-time composition. Our latest digital systems allow users to create and manipulate sounds in real-time in ways that were impossible in the past. There are relatively few aspects of production and performance that cannot take place in real time. Many of our systems are highly portable, such as our laptops. Hence one of Delalande's key arguments for an electroacoustic music paradigm is being superseded by technological development.

I am of the view that a paradigm related to music works best when the means of production, the listening experience and the theoretical context are all integrated into it. I believe furthermore that this does not work for electroacoustic works, but that it indeed is entirely relevant to sound-based works whether acoustic or electroacoustic. One important consequence of this recognition is that certain established means of placing music categorically break down to a large extent for the sound-based musical repertoire, another reason for it to exist within its own paradigm. This brings us back to the original question where CDs might be

placed in a CD shop. I personally believe that sound-based works deserve to be placed together ignoring traditional boundaries such as that between art/pop music.[13]

I do not believe that one need to enjoy each of these examples equally. This can be said of classical music lovers or any other type of music for that matter. What I do believe is that the mode of production behind these works possess very clear relationships, as is the case in the listening experience. What should be stressed here is that the music of sounds has taken on challenges far greater than was the case in contemporary vocal/instrumental music in general. (A case can be made that a modest percentage of this repertoire is, in fact, sound-based music.) For example, not only are all aspects of sound ordering and structuring broken open in sound-based music; content in general has as well as has the potential use of space. This is, indeed, the radical departure that sound-based music signifies and it is these new relationships and means of creativity that tie the works together.

Clearly the acceptance of a sound-based music paradigm would offer several benefits, not least in terms of education, a subject that was not pursued in this talk. It would also benefit appreciation and participation, a subject returned to in this talk's conclusion. For the current discussion, the subjects of co-hear-ence and of sound-based music studies are two key areas that would benefit enormously from recognition. Let us now deal with them briefly one at a time.

As far as our subject of co-hear-ence is concerned, it has already been demonstrated that a more rigorous classification system is needed and, ideally, that one look more closely at whether we have created a sufficient number of clear genre terms. In *The Music of Sounds*[14] I presented a three-dimensional model for classifying sound-based works acknowledging that the means of presentation forms part of how a work is received. The three dimensions are:

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[13] To illustrate this, I played short excerpts from the following works, mentioning related types of works during this section of my talk:
Acousmatic Music: Åke Parmerud – *Les objets obscures* (and mentioned certain types of electronic music and soundscape composition).
Mixed Electronic Music (a 'negative' example): Mario Davidovsky – *Synchronisms No. 9* (which belongs in my view to the note-based paradigm; not all mixed works do, however).
Roots in Popular Music: Aphex Twin – *Vaz Deferenz* (with a beat) *and* Squarepusher – *Curve* (no beat present; also mentioned were ambient works and the odd case of plunderphonics which makes sound-based compositions from note-based recordings).
Electronica: Ryoji Ikeda – "Check" from his work *C* (and mentioned glitch, noise, no-input mixer works, etc.).
Installations: Andreas Oldörp – *Trost für Anfänger* (*Consolation for Beginners* and mentioned public art work and interactive sound installations as well as new forms of sound-based internet music making).
Turntablism: Scratch Perverts – *99 DMC World Team Championships* set (and mentioned hip-hop and recent experimental forms of turntablism).
[14] Landy, *The Music of Sounds*, pp. 144-146.

The *context* of the work

- Aspects related to a work's *creative practice*
- Aspects relevant to the *listening experience*

These can be elaborated as follows:

i) Context

- *Placement* by way of {traditional/new} {genres/categories}.
- *How a work is performed:* e.g., multichannel, diffused, {solo/group} live performance, interactive, {sound sculpture/installation}, on the Internet, etc.
- *Where it is performed/presented/heard:* e.g., {specialist/non-specialist} concert hall, {gallery/museum}, community space, specific site, anywhere on a CD, etc.

ii) Creative practice

- *How a work has been constructed:* e.g., choice and use of materials, formalisation, place(s) on the language grid, all aspects found on the Sound Production and Manipulation and Musical Structure sections on the EARS site.
- *Compositional intention:* {presence of a dramaturgy/art for art's sake}, {abstract/real world}, expected listening strategies, audibility of materials and/or structure.

iii) The listening experience

- *Things to hold on to:* Prominent characteristics including dramaturgy, relationship with the context of {performed/diffused} presentation, audibility of {sources/sound manipulations/discourse/structure/technological aspects/other elements of construction} or none.
- *Listening strategies:* {heightened, reduced, referential, contextual, technological} listening and all points in between; when each occurs whilst listening to a work.
- *Participation or reception only:* e.g., interactive work, audience participation, dance, Internet music participation or listening only.

Using a system like this one would be, in my view, much more straightforward than the ambiguous and messy situation we currently possess. The system does offer a few problems for which improvements might be sought. Some of the items listed under 'context' are admittedly problematic as, for example, the circumstances of performance can vary between one listening to another leading to two different descriptions. Furthermore, there is an enormous difference, of

course, between participating in an interactive installation, viewing someone else performing the installation, viewing a documentary of someone performing the installation and, finally, listening to a recording of the installation with – at most – a still photo as the only visual information.

This leads me to the view that this means of classification may at times require consciously ignoring lower-level parts of its model, given the circumstances of its usage. For example, they might not be considered when a prospective listener is choosing what to purchase from a CD shop, or online when s/he is looking for a genre/category/type of sound-based music. In such a case, the performance context may not be especially relevant. For anyone merely wanting to browse, most of the other information would be extremely useful.

This model is at least a starting point for the desired goal of achieving greater coherence in sound-based music. As far as the field of sound-based music studies is concerned, the EARS site was constructed to create the field's framework. For the purposes of this talk, an introduction to the site's six main headers and some of the main sub-headers of two of the six will have to suffice. The site is divided as follows:

- Disciplines of Study
- Genres and Categories
- Musicology of Electroacoustic Music
- Performance Practice and Presentation
- Sound Production and Manipulation
- Structure, Musical

We have already presented the second category to some extent. The final three might all appear pertinent to those interested in the second word of music technology. They are crucial to the site and to the field of sound-based music studies when musical application is a focus, whether it is related to a form of spatialisation, a new means of structuring sounds or a means of creating new sounds.

The Disciplines of Study section illustrates clearly how interdisciplinary this field really is. Many of the twenty-one current entries represent clusters, such as Complex Systems and Interdisciplinary Studies. The subject areas range from science to philosophy. More predictable entries include Acoustic Communication, Acoustics, Audio Engineering, Cognitive Science, Computing, Music Education and Psychoacoustics. Musicology is treated separately (see below). Less predictable, but extremely pertinent entries nevertheless, include Archiving, Critical and Cultural Theory, Linguistics and Media Theory. Areas such as Gender Studies and Semiotics appear at the third level.

The Musicology header includes some areas that are identical to the musicology of note-based music, such as Aesthetics, Analysis, History, Criticism, Theory, Philosophy and Socio-cultural Aspects. Even the sub-header, Listening Experi-

ence, could form part of traditional musicology, although I, for one, was never introduced to it. It is when one moves to the content of this section of EARS that particular items, such as Sound Classification, Sound-based Musical Discourse, Schaefferian Theory or Spectromorphology come to the fore.

This framework represents a representation of the architecture for the field of sound-based studies, a field that contributes significantly to the sound-based music paradigm. Although there are excellent examples of work that have been undertaken within many of these areas as the EARS bibliography demonstrates, there are unresolved cohesion issues to be dealt within sound-based music scholarship not to mention a good deal of groundbreaking work at its foundation. We are overwhelmed with history books, be they mainly art or pop music biased. We are equally overwhelmed with 'how to' books and articles in terms of the technology we use. What we are missing are foundational texts in terms of the music's content, its place in society, its theoretical foundations, its classification and so on. Achieving this would be a great benefit of the recognition of the sound-based music paradigm.

Achieving this would also make it easier for educators, broadcasters, others in the relevant areas of culture and the communications media to support this important and highly dynamic body of creative work. When better supported, access will increase. When access is increased, appreciation and participation by people of all ages will increase similarly. It is for this very reason that I consider the recognition of the sound-based music paradigm vital for the future of this fascinating form of artistic endeavour.

Forschung – Musik – Wissenschaft
Fragen elektroakustischer Klänge an ihre Erforschung

Tatjana Böhme-Mehner, Leipzig

Lassen Sie auch mich mit einer Anekdote beginnen: Es ist noch nicht allzu lange her, dass mein – dieser Art von Klang alles andere als abholder – siebenjähriger Sohn beim Anhören eines sagen wir zunächst „elektroakustischen Musikstückes" zu der definitorischen Erkenntnis gelangte: „Elektroakustische Musik ist Musik, bei der die CD nicht kaputt sein muss, wenn sie springt oder kratzt." So absurd dies auf Anhieb auch klingen mag, ist das zunächst in der Tat gar nicht so verkehrt; kann man doch sagen, dass Menschen seiner Generation (von noch viel unsichtbareren digitalen Datenträgern einmal abgesehen) doch eigentlich Musik fast ausschließlich in dieser Konservierungsform und quasi in jedem Fall über Lautsprecher konsumieren.

Dies soll zumindest ein schon vorweggenommener Hinweis darauf sein, dass weder die Rezeptionsweise noch die Konservierungsform unbedingt als besonders sinnstiftende musikwissenschaftliche Kategorie der Genreklassifikation genutzt werden kann, und darauf, welche weitreichenden Folgen mit den technischen Voraussetzungen dieser Musik auch für andere Bereiche einhergingen und noch immer gehen.

Dass es da „springt" oder „kratzt" oder was Irreguläres – im Verhältnis zu erwarteten Abläufen – sonst auch immer passiert, würde schließlich wohl auch der eine oder andere erwachsene Hörer so oder noch erheblich unfeiner angemerkt haben. Hinzu kommt, dass mancher an dieser Stelle selbst mit dem Musikbegriff erhebliche Probleme hat; und Verweigerung kommt da im Übrigen nicht nur auf Rezipientenseite vor. Hier scheint Luc Ferraris Äußerung in idealer Weise exemplarisch:

> „Vom musikalischen Standpunkt habe ich der eigentlichen Musik (lacht) längst den Rücken gekehrt. Aber ich habe nie aufgehört zu komponieren. Man muss sagen, dass selbst die allerrealistischsten Sachen, die ich gemacht habe, extrem komponiert sind. Aber das hat nichts mit musikalischer Komposition zu tun."[1]

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[1] „Du point de vue musicale pour moi j'étais sorti de la musique proprement dit (rit). Mais je n'étais pas sorti de la composition. C'est à dire que toutes les choses mêmes les plus réalistes que j'ai faites sont extrêmement composées. Mais ça n'a rien à voir avec la composition musicale." Luc Ferrari im Gespräch mit der Autorin, 2. August 2005, Paris; auch veröffentlicht: *Luc Ferrari. Portraits polychromes*, hrsg. von Ina-GRM, 2. Aufl., Paris 2007, S. 47-54.