

# Abstracts

Lukas Haselböck, Sound and Meaning in Gérard Grisey's Œuvre

In many of his texts and interviews Gérard Grisey emphasized that spectral music draws its properties out of the nature of sound itself. This implies a tendency towards purism and a rigorous criticism of any reference to levels of signification and meaning. A closer scrutiny of Grisey's music shows, however, that this apparent opposition can be questioned in several ways. Grisey's musical thinking can be localized on the threshold between sound and meaning – it is a »liminal« music (*musique liminale*). Analytical comments on Grisey's *Licône paradoxale* for two female voices and orchestra (1992–94) exemplify this.

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Hugues Dufourt: Gérard Grisey: The Constitutive Function of Time

The premises of early spectral music can be differentiated from serial music through its inherent characteristics. Composers of integral serialism such as Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and Luigi Nono operated with discrete elements which they integrated structurally. In contrast, the sound continua of Gérard Grisey, in works such as *Espaces Acoustiques*, were inspired by theoretical and artistic approaches, such as Henri Bergson's philosophy of duration and Jean-Claude Risset's exploration of timbre. In this essay, Hugues Dufourt asserts that the paradigm of sound continua should not be conceived as an inevitable accomplishment of the dialectic movement of music history, but as a new approach informed by computer science. As a result, he identifies Grisey as one of the great innovators of musical time.

Text: Lukas Haselböck

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Hugues Dufourt: The sense of Gérard Grisey's Œuvre

There is evidence to suggest that Grisey's music of the 1970s and early 80s can be described by the paradigm of progressive metamorphosis. In the late 1980s, however – after *Les Espaces Acoustiques* – Grisey sustained a crisis which he tried to surmount through studies in psychology, ecology and linguistics. This led to a gradual transformation of his musical language and a new approach

which could be called the »archaeology of sense«. By trying to define Grisey's late style, Dufourt refers to G. W. Leibniz who associated the beauty of nature with fissures and unexpected intervals, with a delight intermingling the species.

Text: Lukas Haselböck

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Christian Utz: *Périodes, Partiels* and the Corporeality of Sound. Architecture and Process in Grisey's Energetic Form

This essay reconsiders Grisey's contribution to the discourse on musical form as a phenomenon spanning the opposed metaphors of (spatialized, static) architecture and (temporal, dynamic) process. Although Grisey aimed at a processual, expectancy-based musical form and explicitly discarded the speculative time concepts of serial music, his works in fact testify to a close entanglement of structural (architectonic) and phenomenological (real-time-oriented) conceptualizations of form. By confronting the postserial formal structures in Grisey's emblematic ensemble works *Périodes* (1974) and *Partiels* (1975) with the diverse options they offer for performance and perception (discussed, among others, by reference to detailed comparisons of recorded performances of both works), the present analysis challenges the formal models proposed by the composer and suggests the simultaneity of rationalized architecture and a subversive corporeality of sound as a key to understanding Grisey's specific way to fuse sound and form.

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Lars Heusser: »Il est donc temps de rendre la complexité efficace«. An investigation into style-formation in Gérard Grisey's early oeuvre

A characteristic stylistic profile can be discerned in Grisey's works of the early 1970s. In the course of his progressive dissociation from serial principles, Grisey invoked the micro-acoustics of sounds themselves and derived various compositional procedures from them.

Taking as my starting point analytical observations of several works composed between 1968 and 1972, I here investigate whether or not the beginning of these practices can already be observed in earlier works and, if so, to what extent. In a broader sense, I here endeavour to shed some light on the circumstances that led Grisey to develop his trenchant aesthetic position.

Übersetzung: Christopher Walton

Ingrid Pustijanac: Time and Form in *Les Espaces Acoustiques*: a Reflection on Formal Functions of Inharmonic Spectra

In this paper, the attention is focused on a very specific form of inharmonic spectra which is proximate to the upper threshold of the Grisey's scale of complexity theorized in his article »Tempus ex machina. A composer's reflexions on musical time«, i.e. to white noise. Various functions which this particular spectro-morphological element performs in the temporal and formal organization are examined through some extracts from works of the cycle *Les Espaces Acoustiques*. Different occurrences of inharmonic spectra are also observed from the perception point of view, as elements that are capable of building a sort of a »point of orientation«. Therefore, they contribute to the directionality of spectral transformation processes control. This later is discussed on the basis of some categories recurrent in Grisey's sketches, subordinate to categories derived from the previously mentioned scale of complexity and information theory. The composer's aim is to reduce the gap between composed and perceived temporal and sonic phenomena.

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Florence Eller: Gérard Grisey's *Périodes*: musical and linguistic strategies of the Innovative

From 1974 up to his death in 1998, Gérard Grisey wrote texts to his piece *Périodes*, and some of them call it an aesthetic and technical innovation. The article focusses on the paratext of *Périodes* as well as on the composition and aims to describe Grisey's musical and linguistic strategies of the Innovative. Unknown material from the Gérard Grisey archive at the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel has been utilized and Grisey's allocations have been compared to the results of musical analysis. The study reveals that Grisey discusses the innovative potential of *Périodes* only in the context of the cycle *Les Espaces Acoustiques* and doesn't verbalize all the new compositional means.

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Martin Zenck: Gérard Grisey or the art of infinitesimal and infinite. Towards to *L'icône paradoxale* and *Le Noire de l'étoile*

According to the study *Polychrome* (2008) by Timothy R. Sullivan the whole work by Gérard Grisey could be divided in two parts: the earlier one with the autonomous strategies of principles of »spectralism«, the later one with the new orientation of Grisey's music on literature (*Quatre chants pour franchir le seuil*), on astrophysics with the sonorised neutron stars of the »pulsars« (*Le Noire de l'étoile*) and on renaissance painting as *La Madonna del parto* and re-

naissance science of perspective by Piero della Francesca (*L'Icone paradoxale*). The present contribution is focussed on this topic's and on the conception/perception of time in the music and musical thinking of Gérard Grisey and on his new orientation on the middle age »Quadrivium«, in which music is only a mathematic discipline and on the paragone by Leonardo, where music is the sister of painting with geometrical implications in the theory of perspective. The last part of the article concerns the relationship between a special concept of an open astro-space and a parallelism of Edgar Varèse. In general this study tries to bring together aspects of limination and infinite: the limite of minimal and endless.