

06/05/2023 – 04/06/2023, *ton not. not ton*. Lisa Alvarado, Samuel Beckett, Gavsborg, Channa Horwitz, Anja Kreysing, Musica Mosaica, Kunsthalle Münster

Concert, performance, exhibition: *ton not. not ton* is devoted to the sound of things—sound emerging in the form of acoustic interventions, in objects arranged within the space and in one's own imagination. It is all about the infusion of visual art with music. This second edition focuses on textures, frequencies, structures, colours, patterns and movement. Likewise, the score or choreography is considered as a formative and visual instrument. *ton not. not ton* examines the way in which sound articulates motion, spaces, dynamics and, above all, time. As in the musical contributions, rhythm is also inherent in the works of visual art, giving them a performativity of their own.

With Lisa Alvarado, Samuel Beckett, Gavsborg, Channa Horwitz, Anja Kreysing and Musica Mosaica, the second edition of *ton not. not ton* also compiles contributions by both visual artists and musicians, bringing together those who operate at the boundaries of their respective fields. The first edition of *ton not. not ton* was staged in autumn 2021 with contributions by Florian Bräunlich, Gerrit Frohne-Brinkmann, Sven-Åke Johansson, Museum of No Art, Tomoko Sauvage, Saskia Senge, Gesa Troch and Hannah Weinberger: <https://www.kunsthalle-muenster.de/en/programm/ton-not-not-ton/>.

Channa Horwitz (1932-2013) had worked on a system of drawings since the early 1960s. Derived from the format of American standard graph paper, the artist renders time using graphic entities and motion in time as associated colour schemes, thus designing structures that translate temporal-spatial relationships into drawings. Most of her drawings are based on the numerical sequence one to eight and a colour code assigned to each digit. She arranges the number sequences in ever new variations, developing them into highly complex systems. Her works resemble graphic notations demanding to be deciphered. For Horwitz, this deliberate restriction to the simplest rules did not mean a limitation in the name of creative self-censorship; it was instead an attempt to find an aesthetic language so pure and untouched by the significations of the world that it could reproduce the passage of time with approximate precision. "If I wanted to experience freedom," Horwitz said in a conversation with Chris Kraus in 2005, "I needed to reduce all of my choices down to the least amount."

Since the late 1960s, Horwitz has also used a series of drawings, which she called *Sonakinatographies*—a compound of the Greek words for "sound", "motion" and "notation"—as choreographic source material for performances. Her pieces stretch the genre boundaries between dance, performance and visual art. Here, three works from the complex of *Sonakinatographies* are on view: *Sonakinatography XI Variation II* (1981), *Sonakinatography Composition XXII Number 2* (1981) and *Sonakinatography Composition XXIII* (2002). From 1968 until shortly before her death, the artist had worked on countless variations of the 23 different compositions in the series. Each of these drawings can be interpreted musically or choreographically and enacted as a concert, performance or spatial installation. During the opening of the exhibition, the sound artist and accordionist Anja Kreysing will perform an interpretation of the works; she will use her computerized accordion to play the scores.

Lisa Alvarado (b. 1982) is a visual artist and musician. Her artistic practice is informed by textile tradition and public mural painting in America, her family's experiences as Mexican Americans living in the border region, the Chicano movement and her musical performances with the band *Natural Information Society* in which she plays the harmonium. While the colours she uses in her paintings recall modernist paintings, the geometric compositions are reminiscent of Mexican textiles. Her works hover between categories. Some of the graphic step-like shapes, prismatic compositions, meandering or zigzag patterns and glyph-like forms seem inspired by Mayan textiles; other painted surfaces recall desert scrub, coral reefs and aerial photographs. Alvarado began producing works conceived as portable sets for the band *Natural Information Society* in 2010. They allow the audience to be drawn also visually into the dynamics of sonic action. When you look at her canvases, you get the impression of seeing more the longer you look. Lines begin to slip, patterns flutter, sharp angles shift, colours light up, shapes appear to be in motion.

The first of Samuel Beckett's (1906-1989) minimalist television plays, realized for the Süddeutscher Rundfunk, appeared in 1980 under the title *Quadrat* (Quad). In the piece, the interplay of time and space is demonstrated in the strictest manner. It operates with the serial play of a movement pattern enacted by four actors. Made both recognizable and unrecognizable by their coloured hoods, they perform a relentless closed-circuit drama: once they have entered the square, they are condemned to walk the six steps of the longitudinal and diagonal lines of the square monotonously and synchronously, accompanied by different drum rhythms: Actor 1: AC, CB, BA, AD, DB, BC, CD, DA; Actor 2: BA, AD, DB, BC, CD, DA, AC, CB; Actor 3: CD, DA, AC, CB, BA, AD, DB, BC; Actor 4: DB, BC, CD, DA, AC, CB, BA, AD. The centre of the square, marked with a dot, is always bypassed on the left. The mathematical precision of the choreography is made possible by exact timing, an automation of sequences and actors in an almost machine-like state. Variation within the choreography is limited to the number of actors on stage and the resulting changing colour constellations.

Musica Mosaica focuses on composition according to predefined principles and constraints based on a strictly approximative understanding of musical fundamentals such as rhythms, intervals and notes. After years of playing mainly improvised music in various projects (Buffle, Humus, Saule), Brussels-based Xavier García Bardón and Emmanuel Gonay have now transferred their intuitive approach to the field of writing. In a search of flatness and perspective, they formulate rules yet allow themselves to circumvent them. They collect sounds and images from different sources and apply different protocols to create a divergent perspective marked by film editing and geometry.

Gavsborg has been producing music with the *Equiknoxx Music* label for over ten years. The Jamaican ensemble of the same name pairs classic dub and sound-system techniques with broken beats and eclectic samples atypical of the genre; you hear crackling bags or bleating horns, quacking ducks or brazenly squawking birds of prey. His versatility and unconventional musical approach have enabled Gavsborg to collaborate with a variety of artists and labels such as *Mavado, Aidonia, Dirty Projectors, Palmistry, Addis Pablo, De La Ghetto, Busy Signal, Spice, Missy Elliott, DDS, Swing Ting* and *Domino Records*. For the opening of *ton not. not ton*, Gavsborg will play a solo live set based on his experimental EP *Jamaican Drum Machine*. This does not refer to a specific machine or instrument, but is rather about the feeling that Jamaica gives him.

Curators: Nguyen Phuong-Dan + Merle Radtke

Opening: 5/5/2023, 6:00 PM

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