

PALABRAS 1 AND EL ESCRACHE

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Palabras 1 and *El escrache* are two excerpts from *touch'n'go/toco y me voy*, a 50-minute composition for eight-channel computer-generated tape, actor and hypertext. The work is divided into self-contained short sections that can be freely combined. Each musical section has short literary texts complementing and developing the ideas presented in the music. *touch'n'go* proposes a network of meanings by establishing relationships among materials, perceptual and compositional processes and references to social and political issues. The ideology underlying the piece is expressed in (1) its thematic axis: the gaucho or traveler; (2) in its structure: a path established by the listener/reader; and (3) in its sound material: direct references to social and environmental contexts.

Cross-culturalism has deeply influenced Latin American and Argentinean intellectual practices. The traditional Argentinean epic poem Martín Fierro addresses the interaction between Indian, black and white culture and the emergence of a new socio-cultural identity: the gaucho. This social identity is faithfully expressed in the work of the philosopher, poet and composer Atahualpa Yupanqui. His voice is a key referential element in the first piece, a section of *touch'n'go* entitled *Palabras*; his voice is recognizable throughout the piece, and its timbral quality is modified to reinforce its presence. The opening verses in *Palabras*—"During those times such things happen that do not happen anymore"—sets an atmosphere of story-telling. This is underlined by an outdoor background sound that frames all sound events. By means of real-time granulation I created exaggerated inflections in Yupanqui's voice, e.g. "muuuuuy" (meaning "very" in Spanish), or "proffffundo" (meaning "deep"). In the verses "If the river is wide and deep, that one who swims well gets across," the word "deep" is time-stretched to last approximately 1 minute. Thus, sound material and compositional processes are inextricably tied to the metaphors laid out in the spoken text.

A human-rights organization defines *escrache* in the following terms: "*Escrachar* means to put in evidence, to make public, to unveil the existence of a person who tries to hide away." The second piece included here, *El escrache*, establishes a closely knit game of social meanings and sound processes. Literal scraping, or its computer simulation, and "scraping off the surface of social wounds" are used interchangeably. Social bonds—carnival, public demonstrations—and isolation among individuals are directly reflected by the macro- and micro-temporal structure of the piece, for example, the broken Brazilian samba played with a hybrid of breaking glass and *cuica* [1]. (For more details, see the article by Damián Keller in this issue.)

Note

1. The *cuica* is a friction drum played by rubbing a piece of cloth along a reed that is affixed to the inside of the drumskin.

Damián Keller is Porteño by birth, Latin American by conviction, and musician by insistence. His music is available at <<http://www.earsay.com>> and his papers can be read at <<http://www.sfu.ca/~dkeller>>. His current work deals with ecologically based compositional models.

L'ÉPREUVE DU LABYRINTHE

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Labyrinths come in many different forms: In some cases the aim is to reach the center; in others, the process of discovery and change while traveling through the labyrinth is most important. All labyrinths can be understood in terms of one of these two approaches and can be musically symbolized by combining aspects of time (meter, rhythm and pulse) and space (pitch and acoustic spatialization). The title of my work on the LMJ10 CD, *L'Épreuve du labyrinthe* (The Labyrinth Trial), is taken from an autobiography of the same name by Mircea Eliade, in which he talks of the trials one undergoes in the course of a lifetime and the challenges posed by countless paths and directions. The tape consists solely of viola sounds superimposed on rhythmic fragments taken from Afro-Brazilian popular music. These recorded fragments use the viola's unique tonal qualities in the lower register (the third and the fourth strings are tuned down to Eb and Ab respectively). Each path is highlighted by enhancing the sounds through different digital filters. This makes it harder to perceive the recurring rhythmic patterns, but at the same time the beat remains steady. My hope in this piece is to create a labyrinth through linear time that echoes many different cultures. The solo part consists of a microintervallic melody, rhythmically swinging with the tape. Maurizio Barbetti, to whom this piece is dedicated, recorded all the fragments and loops on tape in the GRAME Studios in Lyons, France, 1995–1996. The sounds were filtered and mixed by the composer with the technical assistance of Jean Luc D'Aleo. The post-production was realized in cooperation with Francesco Sardella at Pink House Studios, Italy, in 1997.

Aldo Brizzi was born in 1960 in Italy and graduated from Bologna University. He studied conducting with Sergiu Celibidache and Leonard Bernstein. He received a prize as part of "European Year of Music 1985" and was musical director of "Ensembles of Ferienkurse," Darmstadt, 1990–1994. He is currently teaching at University of Salvador, Bahia, Brazil. His music has been played by, among others, the strings of the Berlin Philharmonic, the European Union Youth Orchestra, Bamberger Symphoniker, Radiosinfonieorchester Baden-Baden, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France and Arditti String Quartet. Brizzi has worked with Ennio Morricone and Giacinto Scelsi, conducting recordings for Salabert/Harmonia Mundi ("Superchoc de Le Monde de la Musique 1990") and e INA/memoire vive ("Diapason d'or 1993"). He also opened the World Music Days 1993 with a concert on the Teotihuacán pyramids in Mexico and wrote stage music for Le frigo, produced by Alfredo Aris on the Palais de Chaillot, Paris, 1999. In 1998 he released the CD The Labyrinth Trial. Brizzi has made in-depth studies of African, Asian and Latin-American music and collaborated with pop musicians from Europe, Brazil, Mexico and Cuba in the formulation of his style. He has also collaborated with Arnaldo Antunes, Margareth Menezes, Tom Zé, Ala dos Namorados, Olodum and Virginia Rodriguez.