

# Music and Nature

## Leigh Landy

'MARINA' is the first in this series of compositions inspired by and performed in (un-)natural nature. It involves an ensemble of brass and percussion players and is to be performed at a marina (boat harbor, i.e., a man-made creation implanted in nature) for a length between 30 minutes and one hour to be chosen by the performers based on performance circumstances. The musical modules are all entirely based on the sounds one can hear at a marina. The instrumental parts are thus very simple and have a form similar to that of the natural sounds of a marina. Other modules can be added to a performance of 'MARINA,' such as extra related sounds, video, light effects or dance, again depending on the particular performance space. The piece is anything but spectacular - most of the sounds are relatively quiet and the visual element of the piece is not in the slightest shocking. In a sense 'MARINA' accentuates the sounds found at a boat harbor and through this accentuation emphasizes the uniqueness of a marina's soundscapes when the piece is not being performed. There are no soloists in 'MARINA' other than the harbor itself. The ensemble of various size, is one organic unit continually communicating among itself, with the marina, and with the public. Special attention is to be given at each performance to sounds that are specific to any given performance space. Due to weather conditions and the diversity of types of different boat harbors no two performances resemble one another.

## MUSIC AND NATURE - A Series of Compositions

The series of my works called MUSIC AND NATURE is based on the dualism of nature and the natural. The works are, to paraphrase John Cage, a reflection of these natures in their means of operation. Obviously the goal of this series is to enhance a public - which I consider a community along with the performers - to just listen to the sounds of a given milieu.

These two words - 'nature' and 'natural' - often play an important role in my music. By nature I mean literally that my music can be influenced by and performed in nature. The natural, on the other hand, a derivative of human nature, may be considered nature's cousin. Here I work with what I consider to be natural to a specific public given its own culture.

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LA BIENNE (for a church)  
L'ECOLE DE MUSIQUE (music school)  
POLDAW, DIJKEN EN DAMM (for polders, dikes and dams)

Furthermore, suggestions will be put to consideration for any places, specific environment pieces or, exceptionally, a piece for an occasion. In all cases the performers may include amateur musicians. Details on the above are available on request.

...its pieces...

- MARINA - for brass and percussion instruments, various optional modules and a boat harbor.
- MUSEUM - for video, tape recorders, guide and a small exhibition space of a museum. Sounds are divorced from images so that the 'viewer' confronts sounds ignored for years.
- MOUNT - music and visual effects along a mountain path. It consists of a combination of the sounds of the mountains with that of its (ab)users and with some sounds that are hardly recognized as belonging to a diagonal podium.
- APARTMENT - newly constructed or abandoned. For practicing musicians and many, many televisions in the tempo of the rhythm of life.
- CEMETARY - in which the composition 'REGIONES INSTRUMENTALES' for 21 - 99 musicians (1977) is performed.
- TELEPHONE - which, as in the case of most music today, allows the listener to hear and perhaps even view the performance at home. Sounds of the telephone as well as its users should guide the way; hopefully no wrong numbers will be dialed.

----other pieces planned include:----

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|---|------------------------------------|
| STATION (for train station)                             | JARDIN (for a park's garden)       |
| WOOD (for a forest)                                     | GROTTO                             |
| HILLS   | STRAND OHNE MENSCHEN (empty beach) |
| SKYSCRAPER  | TUNNEL                             |
| ISLE ('Short Island')                                   | DUMP                               |
| USINE INUSITÉE (Abandoned Factory)                      | FALL-OUT SHELTER                   |
| TOUR D'UNE TOUR (Tour of a Tower)                       | IGLESIA (for a church)             |
| LABYRINTH   | PARKING (indoor garage)            |
| L'ECOLE DE MUSIQUE (music school)                       | SWAMP                              |
| POLDERS, DIJKEN EN DAMMEN (for polders, dikes and dams) |                                    |

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...a compositional approach

My current approach to writing music is an attempt toward a musical synthesis of what I call the technological with the organic. Structure is inevitable in any musical work. I let circumstances decide how deeply defined structure must be in a performance of my music, as I shall now try to explain. This emphasis on circumstances is fundamental to my approach to the synthesis. Performers, the musical performance space, the public, and the cultural values of performers and viewers all play a role in the forming and interpretation of this structure.

Recently I have been experimenting with the emphasis on having performers make small-scale decisions influenced by the performing environment, i.e., I have been making music for the place at which it is performed. I believe that contemporary music must introduce a new form of regionalism, that is, music performed for listeners in their own cultures. This music is regionalist in two senses: the regionalism of the cultural input on the composer and performers on the one hand and that of the cultural input in terms of communicating to a specific public on the other.

Essentially this gets done in the following manner. A score, be it mainly text instructions with musical guidelines, or traditional music notation with 'breathing space' for interpretation, informs the performer(s) of the framework of the piece. The musicians are requested in turn to work out this framework in a way that is comfortable for them and that can equally communicate to the listener.

In works for several performers, a number of fragments of musical material are assigned to the many players, possibly including a part for tape recorders, visual parts, and parts for electric instruments. These fragments or modules are to be permuted, repeated, and combined in various ways. The structure is in the fragments themselves, as well as in the multiplicity of combinations thereof. The choice of these musical fragments, often made by the musicians themselves, is a way to present this music so that the performers can communicate to a specific public.

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with the collaboration of  
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