

RE DISCOVERIES 5

Benjamin Thigpen

still

still i	6'52
still ii	7'20
still iii	9'15
still iv	9'39

pulse

pulse i	7'58
pulse ii	9'00
pulse iii	7'06

PRESENTED BY

SERG (SOUND EMPORIUM RESEARCH GROUP)
AND
DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC
THE UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

AT

BUTCHART RECREATION HALL
THURSDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2016
19:30 - 20:30



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

STILL (2009)

Calm like the sea;

Like a high wind that never ceases.

– Lao Tzu

The stillness in stillness is not the real stillness. – Ts'ai-ken t'an

It rests by changing.

– Heraclitus

In April 2007, I spent two weeks recording the sounds of a few objects: a long cardboard tube, a wooden cutting board, two mirrors and a window, some stones. Day after day, without any particular goal or any clear idea of the purpose of my research or of where it might be leading me, I continued to make recordings - varying the positions of the microphones, changing the tools used to excite the objects, exploring various playing techniques and methods - seeking, above all, to draw the full musical potential out of these specific objects and four microphones.

Two years later, I returned to the place of the recordings: the island of Gotland, in the middle of the Baltic Sea - where the sky and the earth and the sea strike the senses and the spirit with an extraordinary presence, where the light is stunningly transparent, overwhelmingly limpid and clear. Listening to the sounds, I understood that they were already music; they wanted only to be together. So I combined them without any electronic transformations, applying only equalization, compression and reverberation.

And while I was composing, the sounds spoke: of the stillness in movement, of the calmness of the sea, of stability in the continuous flow of change...

still i 6'52 / still ii 7'20 / still iii 9'15 / still iv 9'39

Composed in Sweden at VICC and EMS, and in Paris at GRM. Commissioned by InaGRM 2009.

PULSE (2015)

a bird flying leaves no mark of its passage - Chuang Tzu

Small fragments of an endlessly pulsating universe: arising and subsiding. Only that... Clouds in the sky, waves in the sea, branches in the wind, the ever-changing colors of the northern sun...

pulse i 7'58 / pulse ii 9'00 / pulse iii 7'06

Composed in Sweden at EMS and VICC, and in Paris at GRM. All the sounds were produced by a Buchla 200 analog synthesizer. Commissioned by InaGRM 2015.

Benjamin Thigpen. Nomad, born in the United States, naturalized in France. After dropping out of conservatory, he earned degrees in English literature, comparative literature and aesthetics. He taught computer music at Ircam (Paris) and at the Conservatorio di Cuneo (Italy); he currently teaches at Arts2 (Belgium), while also giving concerts and working as a freelance musical programmer.

He creates music for loudspeakers – composing for fixed media in the studio, performing as an electronic musician in concert. He works regularly at GRM, at VICC, at EMS, at l'Espace Totem, in his apartment, in airports and in trains. His music is on two solo CDs - divide by zero (Sub Rosa 2011) and human for scale (EMF Media 2005) - and a third will appear this year on empreintes DIGITALes. He performs in the duo Rust with instrument inventor and composer Jean-François Laporte, in Fluid Identities with cellist Benjamin Carat, and in various configurations of Bobine with composer and electronic musician Stefano Bassanese.

He thinks that music is not a language but a lived visceral experience, and that it is not the art of sound but the art of the transcendence of sound.

<http://www.benjaminthigpen.net> || <http://soundcloud.com/benjamin-thigpen/sets>

MMus in Sonic Arts Programme

University of Aberdeen

1-year full time | 2-year part time

For more information:

http://www.abdn.ac.uk/study/courses/postgraduate/taught/sonic_arts