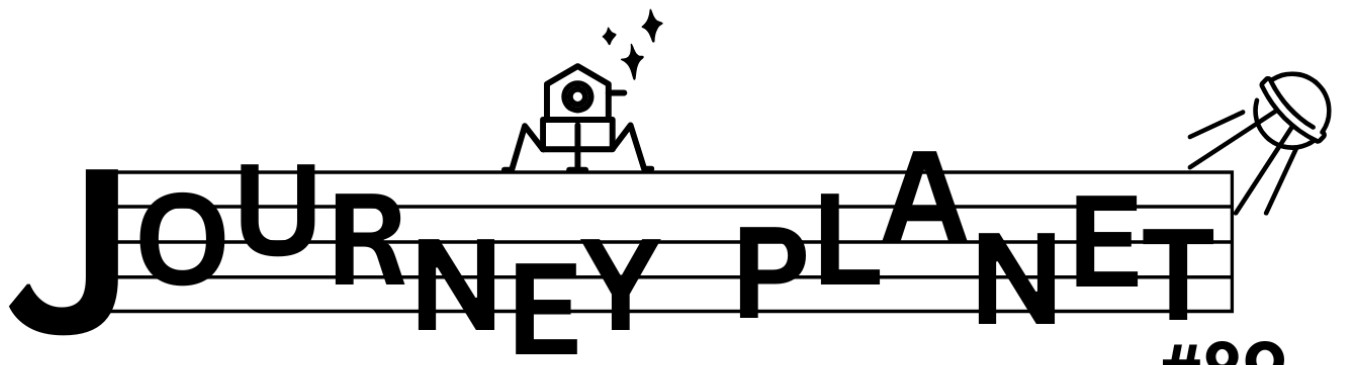


JOURNEY PLANET



#89



MUSIC

Journey Planet 89 ~ December 2024

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Introduction

by Ann Gry

What a year!

This is the only fanzine I worked on in 2024! It's been a busy year: film festivals engagements across the world—Ireland and Thailand; we released a visual novel *Loop* which is inspired by Irish mythology and has a really nice soundtrack; I also end this year as a paid writer—a narrative designer for a massive fantasy video game.

Music has always played a large part in my life. Growing up in the era of the Internet, it was easy to find and listen to a huge variety of genres and artists, so my tastes have been supremely eclectic. A few things stand out, though: Russian “rock” band *Splean*, a lot of their songs are folky and influenced by great poets like Mandelstam and Brodsky. Their songs inspired me and charged me with creative energy to write when I was young. Here's a rough translation of one of their songs called “Walk through the forest”:

*The time of trains has wandered away on foot down the rails,
The time of ships has sunk to the depths, leaving only waves,
Only waves above us, only wind and reeds.
All I ever wished to know, I learned from books,
All I ever wished to say cannot be held by words,
I cannot express this wonder of wonders.
You know, I longed to walk with you through the forest,
But something holds me in this city, on this avenue.
I wish your body would sing a little longer,
And I will search for you everywhere, until the very end, until death.*

*You can listen to it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pkkelgv0Kw>

The TV show *Supernatural* introduced me to a lot of good classic rock bands, which are still my favourites: Blue Öyster Cult, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Foreigner, and many many others. This was hugely influential as they worked their soundtrack really well into the scripts and stories.

All the indie bands opened up the world of talented singer-songwriters for me. I always listen to the lyrics first, and music accompaniment is not necessarily important. Hence, I love Leonard Cohen and Jackson C. Frank, and seek songs that touch me with the beauty of the words.



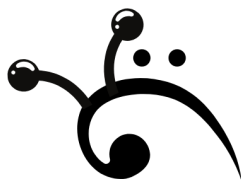
Fandom songs and LHC band in particular—LHC created songs based on a monumental fanfiction on Pacific Rim called “Designation Congruent With Things” by cleanwhiteroom. I like it when people share their love and I’m happy to be a part of that fandom!

Since forever I’ve been creating playlists and have quite a few thematic lists (like those that mention sea or roads), and fandom (I have “Hawkguy” and “John Constantine” ones on heavy rotation). I like to create those secluded digital spaces that have their own imaginary worlds in them, that might spark some associations or stories in me, but not necessarily in others.

For this issue, I wanted to compare my experience with other creatives. This year I spoke on several panels during WorldCon, and reached out to a few of my co-panelists: writers AT Greenblatt and Wole Talabi, both of whom mentioned on their blogs that they do care about music! So please find out more about this in their interviews.

I decided that I wanted to write about music in games—Zelda and The Witcher series, but as I started digging, I realised I need to concentrate on one, so this time it’s Zelda! Hope you enjoy my article!

A note on the cover: I can’t read music, but I was thinking of weird shapes for planets and this kind of sprung at me as a funny one to stumble upon in space. I’m particularly proud of this little guy:



You can find me here:

Website: anngry.com

Threads/Instagram: [@anngraigh](https://www.instagram.com/anngraigh)

Interview with writer Wole Talabi

What role does music play in your creativity?

A big one. A lot of my early writing was inspired by songs I heard that triggered a specific image in my mind or evoked a specific mood, a mood that seemed to conjure up a story. These days that happens much less, but I still listen to music a lot when I write. I wanted to be a movie director before I really got into writing, so when I write I still visualize scenes as I would in a movie, including a soundtrack.

What do you listen to when writing or reading? Does it matter if the music has lyrics?

I listen to all sorts of things. Every kind of music in every possible genre. But generally, I prefer music that doesn't have lyrics. Just a melody that helps put me in the mind-space I feel I need to be in. So that means a lot of classical compositions, a lot of chillstep and dubstep, and a lot of instrumental versions of songs I associate with particular scenes.

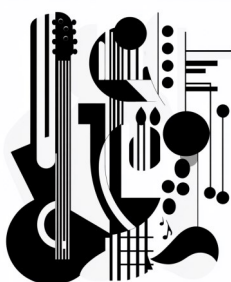
Do you create playlists for your writing projects?

Yes! I make playlists for my long-form projects, which means, my novels. I made [a playlist for my first novel *Shigidi And The Brass Head Of Obalufon*](#). Some of the songs are mentioned in the book. Some are songs I wrote a specific scene to. And some are songs I imagine playing during some of the action. And I am making a playlist right now as I write my next novel.

Do you integrate music into your stories? If so, how? Do you have favorite examples of that from novels, films or TV that you'd like to share?

Definitely. I have integrated music into my stories a few times. A few examples:

- In *Shigidi And The Brass Head Of Obalufon* I reference several musicians and songs directly in the narrative, like “Lady” by Fela Kuti, “Livin’ On A Prayer” by Bon Jovi, and “Kpalanga” by Mr Eazi. These are songs I describe as playing during scenes that take place at concerts or in clubs and bars and also have some thematic connections to the plot at that point in the story.
- I’ve also done something similar in my short fiction, for example, the song “Daisy Bell (Bicycle For Two)” is used in my story “Debut”.
- I wrote a story called “Saturday’s Song” (A fantasy story about revenge against minor gods, a fraught mother & daughter relationship, and Nigerian spirit possession told from the point of view of personified days of the week, and featuring the main character from *SHIGIDI AND THE BRASS HEAD OF OBALUFON*.) In the story, each personified day of the week narrate their sections of a story, but Saturday sings her part. So, I wrote an actual song for the story, set to the tune of “Falling Like The Fahren-



heit” by Kamelot, mixed with what I imagined to be elements of Dan Maraya’s praise-singing style.

In terms of examples from novels, TV and films, I absolutely love the use of “Non, Je Ne Regrette Rien” by Édith Piaf in the movie *Inception*. And I love the way *Mad Max: Fury Road* uses its diegetic music and musicians as part of the story.

I also like the reverse of this, where books inspire songs – like the title of *My Life In The Bush Of Ghosts* by Amos Tutuola inspiring an album by Brian Eno and David Byrne.

What are some of your favourite musicians, bands, or songs?

I like so many musicians and songs that it’s almost impossible to make a list, but I’ll give a few examples off the top of my head. Some of my favorite musicians are: Daft Punk, Muse, Kamelot, Kendrick Lamar, Apocalyptica, Fela, Linkin Park.

And to give a sample of a few of my favorite songs: “Sarabande” by Handel, “Dance With The Devil” by Immortal Technique, “Overloading” by Mavins, “Castle Of Glass” by Linkin Park, “Adagio For Strings” by Armin van Buuren, “Make You Crazy” by Brett Dennen and Femi Kuti, “Forget To Remember” by Mudvayne, “On The Nature Of Daylight” by Max Richter, and “Exogenesis Symphony” by Muse.

As you can probably tell, my tastes are very eclectic.

The *Shigidi* Playlist on Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5wwBk1lLfe5sxZhg8aZA62>

Website: www.wtalabi.wordpress.com

Social media: [@wtalabi](https://www.instagram.com/wtalabi)

SHIGIDI
and the BRASS HEAD
OF OBALUFON
a novel by **WOLE TALABI**

The Playlist

00:07 04:19

featuring Fela Kuti, Kamelot, Mr. Eazi,
Bon Jovi, Yuna, Falz, Doja Cat and more!

@wtalabi Listen Now!
Link in bio

No Sounds Are Forbidden: In C, TGV, and My Trip towards “Composer”

By Chris Garcia

I have always wanted to make music.

There is a significant catch, though; I am tone deaf.

I’ve tried teaching myself how to hear music, I even have taken two instruments and done terribly at both. I have no idea how music works, what makes a symphony, how to approach a piece of any kind of music with anything but an emotional take-away.

And though I know nothing, understand nothing, I still wanna make music.

And like every other creative endeavor I have ever undertaken, I have not let being clueless stop me!

At the Computer History Museum, I was the curator dealing with computer graphics, music, and art. Over the years, my focus moved between those three, but around 2016 I started to look most thoroughly at music and computers. In part, this was because I found a video tape called “Mockingbird: a Composer’s Amenuensis” that told of Mockingbird, a 1980s computer program designed to allow composers to write scores on their computer screens.

Of course, it was the early 1980s and the computer it was written for, the Xerox Alto (and later the Dorado), wasn’t widely available to composers, even if one of the developers of the system, Severo Ornstein, was the son of one of the 20th century’s most interesting (and longest-lived!) composers, Leo Ornstein. Needless to say, Mockingbird was never commercialized. After I saw the video, I decided to dig around and look for systems that existed that did the same thing. I found something called Noteflight, an on-line software that allowed you to write music using a mouse and a graphical user interface. It was exactly what Ornstein and company had envisioned, and there was a free version!

So, I signed up.

Let me step back and to the left for a second. At that time, I was having a bit of a re-birth. My kids were born in May, 2015, and I had spent four months living in a hospital full of paintings and drawings and sculpture and piano concerts. Lucile Packard’s Children’s Hospital was our home for much of that time, and there are times when your kids are in the various stages of neo-natal care that you just gotta get out and walk the hallways.

I walked the hallways a lot.

I discovered how much art meant to me on a personal level. How I might walk out of the NICU after the third code alarm indicating a kid’s heart had stopped and just seeing a David Gihoooley comedic painting might, for a moment, turn things around. I found myself downstairs in the piano space every time there



was a player at the baby grand. Once, there was a trio: piano, cello, and flute. I didn't understand what I was listening to, but I loved every second of it, though I was chowing down on a box of double cheese-burger and fries at the time as well.

That moment helped, and I started looking into classical music.

I looked in deep enough to realise that almost all the 'classical' music I enjoyed wasn't actually classical at all, but better described as concert music, or contemporary orchestral music. It was around that time that I really got into podcasts, and there were two that I took to right off – *Relevant Tones*, the podcast version of a radio show hosted by Seth Bousted, that focused on playing new stuff and doing interviews, and *No Sounds Are Forbidden*, a masterful in-depth podcast that looked at topics like 12 Tone, Tape Music, or the one that got me: Minimalism.



These two podcasts influenced me in such an incredible way. I have always been able to learn and study history without understanding the underlying thing that I'm looking into. I still have 0 idea how computers work, but there are few people in this world who fully understand the path of computer development. I can't paint (which doesn't mean that I don't!) but I know the history of painting so well, I do multiple podcasts on the subject. I learned so much about the avant garde, and I came to truly love music that I had never encountered before. I had always loved Stravinski's *The Rite of Spring*, and the works of Mahler, Shostakovich, Copland, and Gershwin, but I learned so many more composer's and their works. Steve Reich (who it turned out I had met a decade prior!) and Morton Subotnik and Gordon Muma and Wendy Carlos and on and on came into my view...well, hearing. I interviewed David Cope (and more on him elsewhere) and learned so much about what music did for me.

But no two pieces of music changed everything like *In C*, and *TGV*.

Let's start with *In C*. Terry Riley is one of the key figures in changing 20th century music. He met another massive figure in the development of minimalism, LeMont Young, in the late 1950s, and the two of them teamed up. It was in the 60s at the San Francisco Tape Music Center that Riley really started looking into things like loops. Riley was composing some really cool stuff, but it was there that he met Steve Reich, and that influenced Reich (whose work prior was more jazz and DaDa) and turned Reich into one of the greatest minimalist composers (and most directly led to his masterpiece, *It's Gonna Rain*) and the two formed a legendary feedback loop.



In 1964, *In C*, debuted. It's not a traditional composition. It's not fully written, as Riley has always been about the use of improvisation in music. It has no set duration. There are 53 short phrases that are repeated as often, and in as many combinations, as the players like. This means that most performances are between 45 minutes and an hour and a half. The timing belt for the piece, aka the Pulse, is a piano (or pitched percussion of any kind, really) that just hammers 1/8 notes, C naturally, for the entire darn thing. The pulse was Reich's idea, but Riley really liked it, as it provides just about the entire path for the performance.

I first heard this as an excerpt on *No Sounds are Forbidden*, and it changed the way I listened to music. I knew Philip Glass' work by that point, mostly because of his score for *The Hours* and had even seen him playing live at MoMA. Hearing *In C* made Glass make sense in a way that it never had before. It was not about the things that stayed the same, which was almost all of it, but it was about the tiny differences,

and a lot of it happened within the listener.

I can remember getting out of the car at the Museum's Fremont building, almost running inside, the powercord to my laptop dragging behind me, and taking up my traditional seat in the small library area. No one else was ever in that area unless there was active cataloguing going on, which was rare. I fired up Noteflight, and started putting notes on the screen.

I wanted to be a minimalist.

On December 30th, 2016, my last day of work for the year, I composed my first piece on Noteflight. I called it *37 Minutes* and it took Reich's idea of a pulse, and Riley's idea of repeated phrases. It did something that *In C* does not do.

It made it less about the sounds and more about how it looked on the composer's papers.

The piece is a series of phrases, the same, kinda, that have a unified pulse. Every measure is based on the relationship of the drawn notes on the staves next to one another. Nothing to do with the sound, just the position on the staff, thus any instrument can play any part, though admitted, it's almost impossible for mono-tonal instruments to play it. I did, in my wildest dreams, imagine six bassoonist playing at the same time to achieve the effect, but that's kinda crazy...I think? I really don't know how this stuff works.

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Bassoon (B), Clarinet (Clo), Bassoon (Bsn), Tuba (Tb), and Bass (B). The score is written in bass clef and consists of five staves. The music is highly rhythmic and repetitive, with many notes beamed together. The Bassoon (B) and Clarinet (Clo) staves have a lot of notes, while the Tuba (Tb) staff has a few notes. The Bass (B) staff has a few notes. The score is divided into measures by vertical bar lines.

The relationship never changes, but at times the pitch changes, or a few notes might drop for the measure. Every position, though at least one portion of it, is tied to its relative positions' neighbor, and will always remain the same. So, even if a tone is added, a quarter note made into two eights or a pair of sixteenths separated by a pause, there's still the general tone represented by one of the tones in that same chord.

Again, I think that's the case. I'm kinda guessing through all of this.

The result is absolutely strident, but at the same time, I love it as I basically cut-and-paste (a technique developed on the Xerox Alto!) the phrase onto the various staves for the various instruments. This piece felt like a process piece, much like *It's Gonna Rain*, but at the same time it's got a strange variation

that made me incredibly happy because it was a piece that existed in the computer that could, with the current instrumentation, only exist in an electronic form.

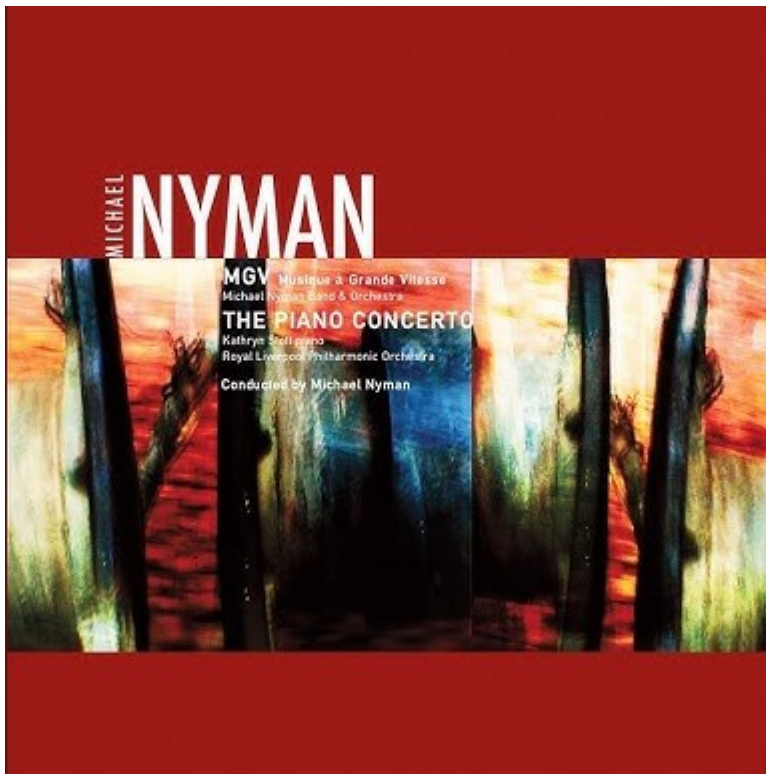
I did a second version of it a week or two later called *A Torsion* and that was even more strident. The slight difference between them was that I tried to give the signature a bit more umph. I don't know if it worked, how would I even?, but I do know that I listen to it now and again and think there's something there.

These pieces were me aping what I was hearing and trying to make sense of it by placing it into something that didn't require me to be able to place the sounds into any sort of tonal context. In other words, I wrote the piece as a visual piece, a minimalist art work, perhaps.

I kept trying new pieces over and over, and none of them came anywhere near those two. After a few months, I mostly stopped getting on Noteflight, though I was listening to a lot more music of the recent times, especially John Adams and Phil Glass.

It was a while later that I discovered on *No Sounds Are Forbidden* a piece that was written by the wonderful Michael Nyman called *Musique à grande vitesse*, most commonly called *MGV*. The day I discovered this, I played it for the kids at bedtime. They got it and Bella boogied down a little to it.

"It sounds like a train, Papa."



And it should; that was Nyman's goal. It was written for the launch of a new high speed train line.

It wasn't as repetitive as *In C*, and it was a million times more lyrical, but it had the same bones. There was a pulse to much of it, and that, more than anything else, gave it the sense of being a part of a train journey. And like a train journey, there were starts and stops, slow-down and go-fasts.

More importantly, there is an emotionality that comes through that is largely missing in a lot of minimalist works. I remember being stunned at Philip Glass' score to *The Hours* because he had drawn so much emotion out of it as opposed to the intellectualism that most of his works operate within.

I started trying to create works in that mode, and to this day, I have not managed.

But I haven't stopped trying.

Inspired by *MGV*, I started composing again, but this time it was actually with a purpose. I had been podcasting since about 2007, but I was launching one a year from 2013, and as I had new ones in the 2018-2023 timeframe, I started creating the theme songs. Some, like my theme for *Short Story Short Podcast*, are brief enough to have been phrases Riley would have used in *In C*. Other were snippets of much longer pieces, some of which were terrible, even to my untrained ears, but had some moments that were usable for a ten second theme.

So, what have I learned? Next to nothing, honestly, but that's not entirely true. I found that there's something about the very idea of creating, even if you don't know what you're doing, has value for you. It can help to put the things you don't quite get into a new form in your mind, and that alone makes the process worth it. The fact you might get something listenable out of it may well be a bonus!

I love composing. I do it every now and again these days, but it's far rarer now that I had to go back to the limited free version of Noteflight. I've still never heard my composition performed by a human, and I may well never, but I still listen to 'em through computer speakers and know I done did som'thin'!

Journey Planet Trio

♩=120

Score for measures 1-4. The piece is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 120 beats per minute. The instruments are Bassoon, Electric Bass, and Violoncello. The Bassoon part has notes in measures 1, 2, 3, and 4. The Electric Bass part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in measures 2 and 4. The Violoncello part has a single note in measure 3.

5

Score for measures 5-8. The instruments are Bassoon (Bn.), Electric Bass (E.Bs.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Bassoon part has notes in measures 5, 6, 7, and 8. The Electric Bass part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in measures 5 and 8. The Violoncello part has a single note in measure 5.

9

Score for measures 9-12. The instruments are Bassoon (Bn.), Electric Bass (E.Bs.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Bassoon part has notes in measures 9, 10, 11, and 12. The Electric Bass part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in measures 9 and 12. The Violoncello part has a single note in measure 9.

Music in the Zelda Games: the Secret Ingredient

By Ann Gry

Two past decades were dominated for me by two video games series: Zelda and Witcher. Both games are absolutely stellar at music. While I wanted to jot down some thoughts on both for a while, for this article I restrained myself to Zelda. So here are my ramblings on music in the series, peppered with some facts and interview quotes.

The Zelda series is legendary in many senses. The first game, *The Legend of Zelda*, was released in 1986. Since then, *Nintendo* did not fail to entertain fans, but they also never failed to revolutionise the video game field in the process. Several of Link's incarnations' adventures are considered among the greatest video games of all time. *Zelda: Breath of the Wild* celebrates its 7th anniversary this year, while still popular, with a follow up game, *Tears of the Kingdom*, that expanded the huge world (kind of tripling it!), released last year to keep the fans busy while they wait for the next installment.

Music has always been integral to the Zelda series. Ocarina tunes are now a part of popular culture, similar to the recognizable Mario theme. Actually, one person stands behind both—Koji Kondo. Kondo is an epitome of a person whose fate led him to be exactly where he was needed. An anecdote he repeats is that as a graduate, he was supposed to apply to many companies, but he saw an ad about a job at *Nintendo*, and only interviewed there, and has worked in that one company ever since. Kondo joined in 1984 as the first dedicated composer, and worked on the *Super Mario* and *Zelda* series. "I had a love of making synthesizers, and loved games, and thought—that's the place for me," he says in an interview.

The times when Kondo started creating his tunes were conducive to innovation. "PCs were just starting to become widely purchased, so I used BASIC programming to create sounds," he recalls. "I worked on Famicom BASIC, which was a keyboard that you attached to your Famicom. In the manual, I wrote instructions for how to program Japanese popular music into the Famicom using BASIC programming." It was very technical and new! Kondo humbly says about his ambition when he wrote music for *Super Mario*: "I wanted to create something that had never been heard before."

In the *Zelda* series, one particular game stands out—*Ocarina of Time* (1998). Not just because it is considered by many to be the best game ever created and has the highest Metacritic rating, but because of how different it is, perfectly suiting the "something that had never been played before" ambition that drove the whole development team. The game is strange, it is challenging, and it is perfect.

Music in *Ocarina of Time* plays a huge part and is also a production of the genius of Koji Kondo, on which he worked alone, creating 80 tracks for it. At the



start, Link (you) are given an ocarina, which is later switched for the mythical Ocarina of Time. You learn 12 melodies in the game, solve music-based puzzles, and play them to teleport; you have to remember and play the music to progress in the game—this was never done before in adventure games. Similar music game mechanics are also used in the next Zelda game, *Majora's Mask*, and the first one I played in the Zelda's universe—*The Wind Waker*.

In *Ocarina of Time*, Kondo started what will become the most recognizable traits of the Zelda series. And he is exactly the person who could think it up and pull it off, being tech-savvy and utilising the console's available features. Next, I will touch upon several things that are innovative in *Ocarina of Time*, and try to ponder over the legacy of those features.

The opening scene

The opening scene of *Ocarina of Time* is a feat of perfection, with music matching the uniquely made footage of Link riding the horse through the Hyrule field with the moon setting in the background. Takumi Kawagoe, Cinema Scene Director, remembers in his interview with Satoru Iwata: “Today, you can use a CG tool to move the camera, but back then we couldn't do that because of how the game was constructed, so we asked to make the system to enable *Nintendo 64* console to move the camera and we used that.” After that was done and the video recorded, Kondo wrote the music to fit the scene, and the music was not a heroic, adventure-driven piece, but a tranquil one—something that made totally different promises to the RPG players.

In *Breath of the Wild*, the game starts with a short interactive scene that introduces the story and the main gameplay elements to you, with zero music. It then invites you from the cave where you wake up from your lengthy slumber to come out onto the bright green field—this is where the music ripples into a breathtaking movement—as you run towards the edge of a cliff, and the game logo appears. This part of the opening scene is an epic one, it shows the bird-view of the vast world, with promises of adventure and exploration, but the melody is also full of that natsukashi feeling, of nostalgia—a complex accompaniment to an active sword-fighting RPG, to say the least! Indubitably, this is Kondo-san's legacy. Ka-



wagoe, by the way, worked on cinematic design for this game.

What impressed me enormously (and still does!) is that this scene in *Breath of the Wild* is seamlessly integrated into the game—once the logo disappears, the camera moves back down to Link, and you can just continue to play. As you expect, the music then doesn't stop or even flinch for loading, it just flows like a river, all game long, adapting to locations and scenes, monsters and characters, and the story. This approach to music truly makes this game great, I submit my countless hours in Hyrule as evidence!

The flow of music

Music flows from one melody to the other without a pause—this is something that feels so natural now in open-world games, where modern computers can render our games in real-time. But before that, at the turn of the century, things were quite different.

Former *Nintendo* Global President Satoru Iwata says about the technical challenges of *Ocarina of Time* production: “there were still strict restrictions in the amount of memory that you could allocate to sound, it was common to stream pre-created music tracks. But by taking advantage of the ROM cartridges of the *Nintendo 64* system, it was possible for the music tracks to be combined and generated depending on the situation.” This is the tech reason music in *Ocarina of Time* constantly changes throughout the game. But not many people noticed that. However, in that interview, Mahito Yokota confesses that he was so impressed by that smooth transition and music flow, that he played the trifold Hyrule field theme on the piano non stop, and went on telling everybody about how great that was. Mahito Yokota is a composer who since then joined *Nintendo* and worked on a lot of games in Mario and Zelda series, including the 3DS adaptation of the original score for *Ocarina of Time*.

Why was this flow so innovative? Because, for instance, in the top RPG of the time, which is a classic *Final Fantasy VII* (1997) with an amazing Nobuo Uematsu score, music changed abruptly to, say, battle music, as the scenes had to preload and switch the interface to battle mode. In *Ocarina of Time*, everything is happening in real-time, you can spot enemies before the battle starts, so music cannot change as sharply. This challenged Kondo, he says: “The flow of the game would break down. So I made eight-bar patterns for the fights, too. As you got closer to an enemy, they would smoothly transition into fighting music.”

This flow and transitions between BGM tracks in games are topics of people's research and PhD theses nowadays!

Interactive music

Directly connected to the above, this endless flow of music throughout the game means that music is interactive—another innovation that blossomed in *Ocarina of Time*.

Kondo compares this to the film scores: “Movie music is compartmentalized at the start and made in line with the pre-determined length of the video. In the case of games, players interactively move the character, and the music interactively responds.” Going back to *Final Fantasy VII*, for instance, Uematsu's approach to composing the game's music was to treat it exactly like a film soundtrack. As a side note, Uematsu had 24 channels available on *PlayStation* for *FFVII*, while Kondo had only 8—that includes the channels used for sound effects.

On the interactivity of his music in *Ocarina of Time*, Kondo remembers, “in dungeons when enemies draw near, the battle music will steadily grow louder. If you come to a standstill in Hyrule Field, the music will have slow phrasing. Should an enemy appear, the music will change to percussion.”

This makes the playing experience that much smoother and atmospheric. To add to that, Kondo worked on the surround-sound for *Ocarina*, which allows you to hear the music from behind as well as from left and right: “If you’re playing on normal television and Link throws a bomb behind him, the sound of the explosion will come from the back. If you go swimming, the sound distortion will make it seem like you’re actually underwater.” All in all, this deep understanding of the console itself drove a lot of innovation—and still does at *Nintendo*, as they develop games in their main series in-house.

In *Breath of the Wild* and *Tears of the Kingdom*, for instance, when you jump into the well, the background music becomes muffled, and the immersion is fantastic. That is the direct legacy of Kondo-san throughout the series!

Background music that does not distract the player

When Kondo was just starting his work on *Ocarina of Time*, Shigeru Miyamoto, the director of the game, gave him just a few instructions, including this: “For the dungeons, try to create music that doesn’t really have a melody, nothing to latch on to.” This gave Kondo freedom but also challenged him further to create the background music that does not take the players’ attention from the game itself.

As they say, the best background music is the one you don’t notice at all—it means it is so integrated into the work, that it becomes one with the narrative and creates a solid rounded experience for you. Kondo reflected on this, saying that when he started he only had 3 channels to work with on *Famicom*, and that made him very efficient with his composing, utilising silence to convey emotions.

This is balanced, of course, by what music does to guide the player through the game—if battle music surges, you should be ready for a moblin! In *Tears of the Kingdom*, one of the superb moments for me is when you leap into the utter darkness of the depths, the underworld, and suddenly, a jazz movement vrooms—just in time to open your paraglider and land safely.

Another great music utility moment for me is from both *Breath* and *Tears*—when you open a new region activating a tower, that accompanying tune is just a perfect pitch for the in-game achievement. I eagerly anticipated each new tower and the last one was a sentimental moment, drawing the end of the game so much nearer, with that majestic tune.

Playing music as game mechanics

Playing an instrument in *Ocarina of Time* was a novelty, an exotic instrument, too! Isn’t this unique otherworldly experience something we seek in video games? But with each idea like this, it has to be tested to ensure it’s fun!

Kondo ponders about this: “Playing an instrument is a much more enjoyable way to accomplish things than just casting a spell. ... There were people suggesting “playing the ocarina is too tiresome, let’s make it automatic.” I was undecided as well, but when I went to examine the situation, I found the complainers were happily playing the ocarina too.”

Making the playing of an ocarina a part of the game mechanics also meant that some other mechanics could be substituted to this one, turning it into not just one of the main mechanics but also into a universal one. For instance, Kondo remembers that at first the player was supposed to use a reed pipe to

call a horse, but it was switched to ocarina later on to make it easier.

A lot of games in the Zelda series then go on to utilise music instruments as game mechanics, or weaving in melodies and singing into narrative and puzzles.

In *Wind Waker*, a light-hearted Zelda game, Link uses a baton rather than playing an instrument, requiring you to remember and play melodies. For instance, the Ballad of Gales allows you to warp around the map, and the Song of Passing turns night into day and back. The characters of Medli and Makar both play instruments, though—lyre and violin, through which they save the world.

In *Breath of the Wild* Hestu's whimsical dance moves with his maracas is something that occupies its own special place in my heart.

In the latest game, the first one to have Zelda as the main character, *The Legend of Zelda: Echoes of Wisdom* (2024), there is a touching quest about friendship and peacekeeping, involving music and singing. The Zora folk love music and there are a lot of quirky instruments scattered around. On the music side,



while the tracks are all great, they do end abruptly, which was noticeable and strange for a Zelda game—given that we are talking about the legacy of the smooth transitions from the past decades. But I loved the way monster sounds integrated into the background tunes, especially the Drippitune, a frog-like creature whose singing called the rain.

Hajime Wakai worked on this series installation; he is also known for *Breath and Tears*, and *Skyward Sword*. For me, *Echoes of Wisdom* is a nice game, but not something life-changing, as I expect any other Zelda game to be. That is unfortunate, as I was looking forward to this one, mainly for narrative reasons! More on that at some other time...



Influences

Speaking about the influences on music in the Zelda series, it goes without saying that all games are unique despite their recurring themes and characters. Hence, each game has its own set of influences in music from around the world.

Kondo confessed that he likes international music, such as Inca and Latin, that's why he "really wanted to put in an ocarina, it seemed really Zelda-esque." *Majora's Mask* score which Kondo also worked on had a Chinese-opera influence, *the Wind Waker* has Irish influence, and *Twilight Princess's* music reminiscent of eastern Europe.

A little known fact is that initially the ranch girl Malon in the *Ocarina of Time* was a songstress, so the horses were attracted to her because of her song—this was Kondo's idea because he is a fan of country music. But this was later changed as it did not really suit the character of Malon, and so she does not sing in the game.

To make the score pop out even with limitations of the time, Kondo confesses to have used TV commercials music: "I made the Lost Woods theme using TV-CF. I did an orchestral version, but then I thought "oh, there are already so many arrangements like this".

Among his personal influences, Koji Kondo also mentions *Deep Purple* (*The Legend of Zelda* "Title Theme" and "Dungeon Theme" are inspired by their "April"), *Lake & Palmer*, Sadao Watanabe, Michiru Oshima, and Emmylou Harris.

I promote Irish culture worldwide, and this might just be the reason why I fell in love with Zelda games! My first game was *The Wind Waker* which is hugely influenced by Irish culture, with its mythology and even real locations! Its music, of course, takes after Irish jigs and reels, and you will hear this instantly, too. The development of MIDI technology allowed for more instruments, and the score features strings, winds, brass, percussion, and wordless vocals. A lot of fun facts surround the production of music for this game, including that Shigeru Miyamoto himself played the mandolin featured in the "Title Theme".



Funnily, at first, Link in *The Wind Waker* was supposed to play theremin! A few of the developers were fans of the instrument and imagined that each control stick on the GameCube pad would control Link's hands as he manipulated the instrument's volume and pitch. But Miyamoto was not impressed by the hardships it put on the control system, so this idea was abandoned.

The Celtic influence from *The Wind Waker* seeped into the great mix that is the score of the latest Zelda releases—you can hear and see Irish inspirations in *Breath of the Wild* and *Tears of the Kingdom*.

A bit outside of the Zelda series itself lies a great musical addition—*Cadence of Hyrule* (2019), which is essentially a *NecroDancer* game in the setting of Zelda and with its characters. This one is worth mentioning here, as this rhythm game is superbly enjoyable for those in love with music in the main series. In *Cadence of Hyrule* you are after a set of instruments, and the whole game is about music, which fits the series perfectly, in my opinion. I mean, in it Octavo uses the magical lute to put Zelda and Link to sleep... What else can you want?! They also released DLCs with other recognisable characters like Impa and Skull Kid.

For me, Zelda is a beloved series of video games, with a lot of continuous innovation by *Nintendo* that truly ripples the field of game development worldwide. It was fun to do research for this article—just a glimpse into the music of *Ocarina of Time* unveiled a lot of interesting facts about the series and its creators. Hope you enjoy the series too, or if you are not a gamer, you at least found some inspiration in these stories!



Music & creativity: An interview with writer A.T. Greenblatt

What role does music play in your creativity?

I'm usually listening to music as I write. When I'm working on an essay or the beginning of a new story, I listen to a Spotify playlist of some sort. But when a piece starts to take shape, I tend to listen to one or two songs on repeat. This is the "soundtrack" of the story and it's different for every new piece. These songs often capture some emotion I'm trying to get down on the page before I've successfully managed to do so.

I used to think I couldn't write a first draft until I found the perfect song to go with it, but I've since realized that was my brain's way of stalling until I figured out what the story was about. These days, I don't always find the story's soundtrack until the second or third draft.

What do you listen to when writing or reading? Does it matter if the music has lyrics?

I listen to a mix of instrumental music and moody indie folk when I'm writing. Unlike many writers, lyrics don't distract me while I'm writing. Sometimes I listen to music while I'm reading, though I usually find myself tuning it out when I do. So music doesn't usually add much to my reading experience.

Do you create playlists for your writing projects?

For short stories, no. But I'm revising a novella now and it has multiple songs for its soundtrack—songs that I have slowly added over the course of working on this project, which has taken me many years to write.

Do you integrate music into your stories? If so, how? Do you have favourite examples of that from novels, films or TV that you'd like to share?

Not often. When I do, it's there to create a mood or set a scene. The opening of "[Questions Asked in the Belly of the World](#)" is set in a metal concert. I should probably add more music and songs to my stories, because I really do enjoy it, especially live. I should also do the same with cooking and food.

I love it when the music in movies, video games, and TV shows is as breathtaking as the visual moment it's supporting. The soundtrack to *Tron Legacy* did this really well. Same for the video game *Journey*.



Your favourites: a. What are some of your favourite musicians, bands, or songs? b. Fandom music, music at conventions — if you'd like to share your favourite moments related to music and fandom!

I have a deep love for indie folk and dreamlike instrumentals. Some artists I've been listening to lately are *Daughter*, *Shearwater*, and Sorcha Richardson. On the instrumental side I like AVAWAVES, Olafur Arnalds, Zoe Keating, and *Hammock*.

I don't have too much experience with music in fandom, but I've always been touched by the warmth that Filkers have shown me when I've wandered into their sessions at conventions. I was thrilled when I met Heather Dale once at Philcon when I first started writing. I loved her music in high school.

Final remarks

I include the songs that acted as soundtracks for my stories on my publication posts when the stories are published. Website: atgreenblatt.com, Bluesky: @AtGreenblatt

I have a story coming out this summer in *Strange Horizons* and an essay in *Uncanny* next year. And I'll be teaching an online class at Clarion West about what to do when you're stuck on a story. <https://secure.clarionwest.org/event.jsp?event=2116&>

A.T Greenblatt

Website: atgreenblatt.com

Bluesky: @AtGreenblatt

The Electromancer of Soviet Cinema

by Andrey Malyshkin

Many of our best memories are from our youth. It so happens that for me some of them are connected with science fiction, and some of them with electronic music. In the beginning of 90s, due to the change of political situation, a lot of things were possible—we lived in the freest country in the world, and this is not an exaggeration. To the right—a bookshelf of translated fiction, which revealed new authors, unknown before; to the left—official music gone and replaced by new electronic music. And although it was a small crack, it was possible to take a glimpse into it for laymen too. And by a strange coincidence, for me, both fiction and music always went side by side.

As a result, as time went on, this interaction grew more and more intertwined.

My journey into electronic music began in the Leningrad Planetarium. At that time the cult electronic duet "New Composers" organised late-night techno-parties—raves. The interiors of the planetarium and the nature of the music prompted the emphasis on astronomical themes. The first party was held in early 1991. Later, the fashion for Soviet cosmonautics came to Moscow, which was embodied in the "Gagarin Party" at VDNKh in December 1991. The words from the "New Composers" track "I want to dance, I want to move my body" became a kind of motto of the then electronic scene.



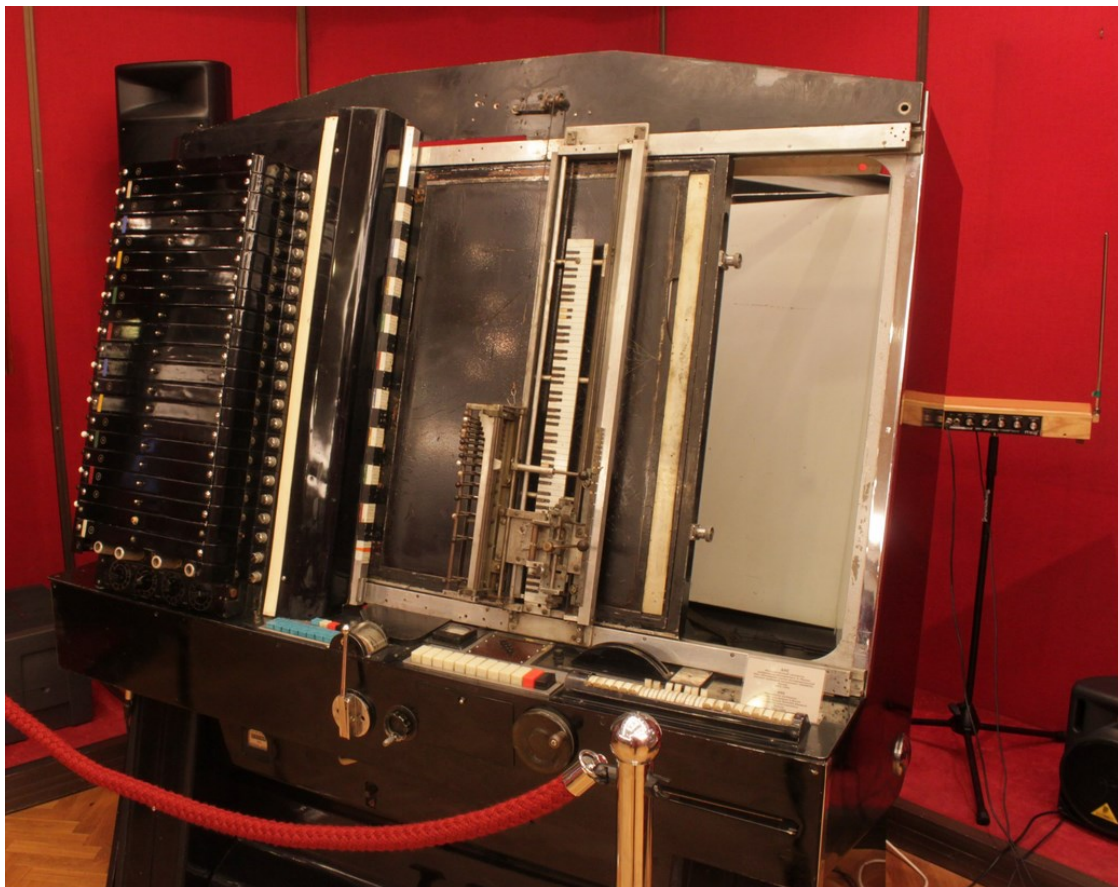
Electronic music existed in synthesis with other art forms and various fields of cultural activity; they complemented and developed each other. Over time, more and more complex and bizarre interactions were built up. In this article, I will try to tell you about the author of electronic music for fantastical films and animation.

Experimental (and more often just electronic) music did not come from nothing and has always existed in the cultural space, although most often as underground. But the person we are going to talk about managed to become as well known as possible both in the narrow environment of electronic music and in mu-



sic in general—Eduard Artyemyev.

Artemyev is rightfully called one of the pioneers of Russian electronic music. In the early 1960s, the twenty-two-year-old graduate of the Moscow Conservatoire was among the few "pioneers" of electronic music. The base for the new generation of electronic musicians was the Moscow Experimental Studio of Electronic Music, established in 1966. It should be said that this was given a great support in the form of the world's first photoelectronic synthesizer "ANS" was developed and created in 1958 by Soviet engineer Evgeny Murzin and all this was located on the ground floor of the Museum-apartment named after Scriabin.



The ANS Synthesizer is named in honour of the Russian composer **A**lexander **N**ikolayevich **S**criabin. He was an innovator, trying to go beyond the usual musical sound, for example, in the musical Poem of Fire "Prometheus", music was for the first time combined with light. With the light part, Prometheus was first performed on 20 March 1915 at New York's Carnegie Hall by the Orchestra of the Russian Symphony Society under conduction by Modest Altshuler. For this premiere, Altshuler commissioned engineer Preston Millar to build a new lighting instrument, to which the inventor gave the name "Chromola". In 1962, according to sound engineer Bulat Galeev, the complete version of Prometheus was performed in Kazan'.

Murzin developed the composer's ideas. He did what Scriabin wanted but could not achieve with orchestral facilities—he extended the usual temperament on the ANS from 12 to 72 tones (or steps) in an octave. All attempts to create music beyond the 12 notes of the piano had the problem of the limited

capabilities of instruments. In this instrument, sound is not generated by an electronic oscillator but by an optical phonograph.

Murzin had two predecessors, Arseny Avraamov and Eugene Sholpo. Composer Arseny Avraamov composed and staged in 1922 the "Symphony of Sirens", which featured various "machine sounds"—from cannon and pistol shots to factory horns and aircraft noise. In fact, this piece of music can be considered one of the first in the "noise" genre. Sholpo decided to build a device that would directly draw these waves on the tape. He made a wheel with different shapes, where each shape represented a different waveform. He no longer needed to draw on paper or take photographs—the drum was spun and everything was automatically transferred to the film. The invention was called "Variophone". By the way, the author gave the original description of the device in a fantastic story, which was found in the archives and published at the beginning of this century. Together with Avraamov, they used the Variophone to voice cartoons in the 1930s and beyond. For example, the film "Dick Sand, A Captain at Fifteen" features Isaak Du-naevsky's melody, synthesised by Sholpo on the variophone.

Artemyev, graduating from the Moscow Conservatory with a composition class from People's Artist of the USSR Yuri Shaporin, accidentally stumbles in the corridor to an advert by Murzin inviting those wishing to work on his miracle synthesiser ANS.

In the period from 1961 to 1963, Artemyev worked in a laboratory at the Research Institute for Sound Research. This laboratory was headed by Murzin, and Artemyev actually became his pupil. During this period Artemyev actively researches the history and theory of electronic music, publishes in the press, makes experiments, and practices in stereo sound recording. He also wrote "Notes on Electronic Music", and in 1966 he started working in the first electronic music studio in Moscow, which was founded by Murzin with the support of Dmitri Shostakovich. During this period, from 1960 to 1966, Artemyev wrote a number of characteristic pieces (especially for the synthesiser (ANS and Synth-100), many of them referring to space themes ("In Space", "Star Nocturne", etc.).



For the first time, Artemyev's experimental-electronic music was heard mainly in documentaries about space exploration. In 1962, Eduard Artemyev and Stanislav Krejci created the soundtrack for the film *В космос (Into Space)*. This documentary was shown as part of a Soviet exhibition abroad. The exposition was held in a specially built pavilion with a five-screen videowall. A soundtrack to this documentary can be found here: <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/ans-synthesizer-electronic-music-ep/1611007839>.

In Stanislav Krejci's personal memoirs, he writes: "That's when we discovered a new way of interacting with ANS: we started drawing free graphics and lines of different thickness. It was an interactive composition: we could hear the result at once, and we knew how to proceed—faster or slower, louder or quieter. For a while this became the main way of working with the instrument.

All the space landscapes were depicted by artist Andrey Sokolov, one of the founders of the space painting genre. He painted on one glass, through which the light passed, and then took several more glasses, moved them over each other to get moving space pictures. The space went deep, and it was very beautiful. In colour. On five screens...".

Artemyev is also working on electronic music design for the exhibition "Soviet Space Technology" in London and the documentary films *Планета Океан* (*Planet Ocean*) and *Дом в космосе* (*Home in Space*).

Moscow Experimental Studio of Electronic Music managed to get hold of a unique synthesiser ANS, and in 1971 its members set themselves an exam: each of them composed and performed a composition specially written for this instrument. Then their works were released on the vinyl record "Musical Offering". The names of these composers are Eduard Artemyev, Alfred Schnittke, Sofia Gubaydulina, Edison Denisov and Oleg Buloshkin. All of them being future classics. True, for Schnittke and most of the other participants of the "Musical Offering", electronic music remained a passing fad—they became famous for "ordinary" symphonic music. But it was in this studio that the talent of our country's most famous electronic musician, Eduard Artemyev, was revealed.

Unfortunately, the ANS system did not provide for the possibility of recording the played music and therefore the recording of the received works was carried out on magnetic tapes, which sharply limited the possibilities of using the device. Most of Artemyev's works are recorded on Synthi-100, which was developed by Russian emigrant Peter Zinovieff for the British company EMS. In 1972, one such synthesizer was assembled in a Moscow studio by order of the "Melodiya" record label.

According to Yuri Bogdanov, a colleague of Artemyev's, "The electronic music studio was then the very real cultural epicentre of the capital: "Foreigners visiting Moscow visited three places: Red Square, the Bolshoi Theatre and our studio. They didn't understand how it could be—just a stone's throw from the Kremlin, strange bearded, hairy people were making electronic music! And legally, the studio was a division of the "Melodiya" record label company. Nobody there understood what we were doing, so they gave us the status of a self-supporting organisation, like "live as you like". But we managed to create a bunch of various devices related to music and light, and in the end we started to stage light and music performances." Peter Zinovieff, the creator of the Synthi-100, arrived in Moscow two months after the synthesizer was delivered to the Studio. Yuri Bogdanov recounts: "When he saw the ANS synthesizer, and us, dishevelled, with burning eyes, he understood everything at once, especially since I had already disassembled his synthesizer to understand what was inside, how it worked..."

Now ANS is in the "Russian National Museum of Music" and is still in working condition. Until recently, the instrument was maintained by Stanislav Krejci, one of the musicians and composers who started working with the instrument.

In 1963, Artemiev wrote electronic music for background space and alien electronic music in the motion picture *Мечте навстречу* (*Towards the Dream*) https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0057301/?ref=nm_flmg_job_3_cdt_t_187 on his ANS synthesizer.

In the later period, Artemyev's creativity is based on sonoristics—"music of timbral sounds"—and ambient, which emerged in the 1970's as "a

style of electronic music based on changes in sound timbres". Ambient is a genre in which the emphasis is shifted from traditional musical structure to the creation of background and atmospherics. This is why many of Artemyev's film compositions immerse the listener in a hypnotic, meditative state.



However, there was a hiatus of almost ten years in fantastic cinema. At the same time, Eduard Artemyev continued to write music for films, cartoons and plays. The turning point came in 1972. A significant moment was a meeting in the early 70's with film director Andrey Tarkovsky. This collaboration led to the creation of one of the most original fusions of cinema and music in SF movies.

In 1972, director Andrey Tarkovsky's film *Солярис* (*Solaris*) was released, almost immediately recognised as a world cinema classic. The film, based on the novel of the same name by Polish writer Stanislaw Lem, tells the story of the relationship between people of the future and the intelligent ocean of the planet Solaris; ethical problems of mankind are considered on the example of contacts with extraterrestrial civilisation. The film's soundtrack was composed by Artemyev, at the time already a recognised leader of Russian electronic music.

In his memoirs, Artemyev mentioned "...Andrey came to our electronic music studio on Arbat, sat and listened (without interest, it seemed to me). That was the end of it. But a year later he called and invited me to Mosfilm to agree to write the music for "Solaris"..."

At the request of the director, who wanted the sound atmosphere of a distant planet, Artemyev created a forty-minute composition containing all sorts of "space" noises (fantastic synthesised sounds, sound vibrations and electromagnetic vibrations of airless space). And the contrast to this noise component is the organ piece "Listening to Bach" symbolising the planet Earth—Artemyev's revised F minor choral prelude (BWV 639). As Artemyev himself admitted, Tarkovsky initially asked him to make only noises. But when he heard the result, he said that he wanted a more spiritual and individual sound. The result was an experimental electronic soundscape reflecting the world of space and the mysterious Ocean of Solaris.

According to the recollections of one of the participants in the making of the movie: "The composer and the director did not immediately come to an understanding. Artemyev didn't know how to respond to Tarkovsky's wishes: "There will be the sound of a stream here. But I need something that will subconsciously attract attention, so that these images will be remembered. So that there would be a sense of human warmth. Together with sound engineer Semyon Litvinov, he began to select sounds, but they could not make them sound special. Then he asked for a session to record the orchestra, but Tarkovsky refused and suggested using electronic sounds and music created by Artemyev with the same experimental synthesizer "ANS". But Eduard wanted to use only natural sounds and real musical instruments. A compromise was found, which was not the most popular solution at that time. Artemyev slowed down the tape recording of the instruments, which changed the tempo and timbre, and then added various noises to this recording. As a result, the orchestra was almost inaudible, but the noises began to sound like music. That's how the whole thing was dubbed."

The work on *Solaris* is also significant in that Artemyev created the first electronic film score, one of the few surviving scores of early Soviet electronic music.

In *Сталкер* (*Stalker*), Tarkovsky took a radical approach to the use of sound, emphasizing its role in creating atmosphere and rejecting traditional soundtrack. He did not need a composer in the classical sense, but rather a sound effects specialist capable of creating complex soundscapes using noise, rumble, and other sound effects. He needed a master of "magic sounds" instead of traditional auteur music.

In addition, the composer was faced with an even more difficult task - the search for a sound related to the spiritual practices of both Western and Eastern traditions, while at the same time uniting the arts of the West and the East.



The composer was faced with the even more difficult task of finding a sound related to the spiritual practices of Western and Eastern traditions, while at the same time uniting the arts of the West and the East. Artemyev recalled that Tarkovsky studied Zen Buddhism while preparing of the filming "Stalker" and had the composer read special studies on the subject.

The opening credits of "Stalker" are accompanied by a mysterious electronic music with oriental motifs, which sets the atmosphere of the whole movie and appears several times in it. This electronically processed theme combines a Western European melody from the 14th century ("Pulcherrima Rosa") and Azerbaijani Mugham ("Bayati Shiraz"), fusing them into a sound reminiscent of Buddhist meditation. Such processing gives the theme a unique timbre, arrhythmic and unusual energy, symbolically linking the cultural traditions of East and West.

The entire journey of the "Stalker" that we see in the film is a transition from the earthly to another space. Before the journey begins, the director chooses means of cinematic expression for the physical space that contribute to the creation of a feeling of discomfort, of being in an uncomfortable environment: the monochrome image conveys its lifelessness. The sound image of this space is characterized by the absence of the sounds of living nature: no birdsong, no wind, no rustling of leaves.

The second stage, reflecting the transition, is the scene of a train ride through the zone. The carriage seems to go on forever, there is a constant monotonous clattering of the wheels. The movement is emphasized only by the sound: the rhythmic clattering of the wheels on the joints of the rails gradually turns into electronic music, which exactly repeats the rhythmic pattern, but changes the echo. This noise-music texture, unusual in its expressiveness, creates a sense of another world. In the final scene, only electronic music remains, and for the first time, color appears in the frame.

Here's how Eduard Artemyev talked about working on this episode: "Three minutes. And nothing happens on the screen. Just a carriage with the heroes rushing forward. But the viewer should feel that something is changing. Reality itself is changing, a new reality is emerging. I thought for a long time about what to use here. Then I guessed it: the clatter of the wheels. What if I played with it? At first I just added reverb—more reverb in one place, less reverb in another. Then I replaced the natural acoustic clatter with an "artificial" one. Then I added a male chorus (and transposed it down an octave). I added - in tiny, literally homeopathic doses—other acoustic backgrounds. The result is that the clatter of the wheels sounds natural at first, and then, with every new dozen seconds, more and more fantastic, distant, "out of place".

And at the end of the journey, in another "spiritual" space, the action takes place in silence, but it is not a lifeless, deadening silence, but a psychological state of expectation of meeting the unknown, the mysterious.

Between these two fantastic films stands the 1975 movie «Зеркало» ("Mirror"). Researchers of Tarkovsky's work distinguish a peculiar trilogy: "Solaris", "Mirror" and "Stalker". All of it is about the search for oneself and the inner path. One way or another, the heroes in them come into contact with

the possibility of fulfilment of innermost desires. And all of it is tightly intertwined with the musical component.

Due to Tarkovsky's immigration to Italy in mid-1980, this unique duo broke up.

Another sci-fi film of the 70s with music by Eduard Artemyev is *Молчание доктора Ивенса* (*The Shutdown of Dr. Ivens*) <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0070402/>. In the film's plot, an unusual-looking spaceship takes off from a distant planet. In a few "jumps," the aliens arrive in the solar system. At this time, as a result of a crash over the Atlantic, the plane, in which, among other passengers, is Dr. Martin Ivens, falls into the ocean. Aliens from the planet Oriana rescue the surviving passengers by removing the details of the crash from their memories.



In the film, Artemyev is presented both as a composer creating lyrical music and as an alternative musician with small electronic intros. Some of the electronic compositions can be found on the album *Anthology. Part 6* <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D1%87-6/1631323920>.

By the end of the 70s, Artemyev was already fully immersed in a new project. For the Moscow Olympics, Eduard Artemyev recorded an oratorio *Ode to the Bearer of Good News*. The music was used in the opening and closing ceremonies, with the instrumental part of the ode being played during the lighting of the Olympic flame and the vocal part accompanying the dance of girls in ancient Greek tunics during the extinguishing of the flame at the closing ceremony.

The work *The Beauty of the Earth* from the oratorio was included in a deep space radio signal sent to the TRAPPIST-1 system and the exoplanet K2-18b as part of the electronic music, art, and science festival *Element*.

Artemyev also wrote the soundtrack to the *Баба яга против* (*Baba Yaga Contrary*) series of animated films. Here, we touch on a still little-studied facet of his work, but more on that later.

Artemyev is probably the only composer whose works were performed at two Olympics (his music was also performed at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Sochi Olympics): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i9InuDGelTM>.

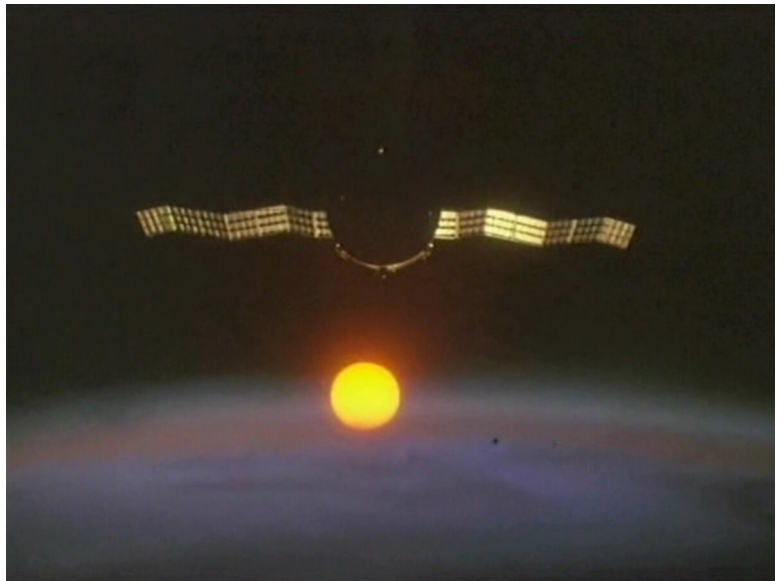


In the 80's, the composer's electronic music is heard in a large number of films, both fantastic and non-fantastic. However, the composer is no longer faced with such a global task as when working with Tarkovsky. In subsequent works there was no synthesis of the screen image with the musical sequence. Cinematography required only an unusual sound that would indicate that the film was fantastic, and electronic music was more suitable than ever.

One of the last notable films was the 1983 release of https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0230961/?ref=nm_film_job_3_cdt_t_102 «Возвращение с орбиты» («Return from Orbit»), a Soviet production

drama about cosmonaut friends. A unique film in its own right. This film was the first film with footage specifically shot in space.

As far as space footage goes, there's not a lot of it. Views of the Earth, the sunrise scene. A stopwatch spinning in weightlessness. And in places, the real astronauts seem to be portraying the film's characters when no faces are visible. Combined with the quality pavilion scenes of working in weightlessness, it all works well. Artemyev's music is represented by both familiar musical compositions and ambient electronica, which is just responsible for the most fantastic moments of the film (the compositions "Start" and "Final").



Until the end of the 80s, fantastic films with compositions by Eduard Artemyev were released almost every year—*Лунная радуга* (*Moonlight Rainbow*), *Семь элементов* (*Seven Elements*, 1984), "The Strange Story of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde", *Корабль пришельцев* (*Alien Ship*, 1985), *The End of Eternity* (1987), *Город Зеро* (*City of Zero*, 1988).

A full list of works can be found here - https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0005949/?ref=ttfc_fc_cr Eduard Artemyev

Most of the fantastic compositions created in the 80s are better listened to separately. They are collected on the disc <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D1%87-4/1631015852> *Anthology. Part 4.*

At the end of the 80's, Eduard Artemyev's withdrawal from the use of pure electronic music was noted, including when writing soundtracks for movies. Of course, the composer did not completely abandon experiments, but there were no more significant works.

One of the rare aspects of Artemyev's creative activity that is talked about is his work in animated films. Work with animated films began in parallel with work in cinematography, in 1963. Until the early seventies, Artemyev worked as a composer at the studio "Soyuzmultfilm". Here he collaborated with director Nikolai Serebryakov. The result of this work was the writing of music for five cartoons with puppet animation and in the technique of cutout animation. The target audience of the animations were children of 5-7 years old, so these works did not require the writing of specific electronic music.

The turning point came when the composer moved to another studio: "Ekran", which also produced animated films for adults. The first animated film made at the new studio with music by Artemyev was released in 1975. By this time he had the experience of rethinking the meaning of music after working with Tarkovsky. In the animated films of this period, there is either little or no text, and the action takes

place against the background of Artemyev's music. These are not overtly fantastical works. Often they are parables with minor fantastic assumptions or fables. Sometimes the unusual sounding music is lost in order to get a glimpse of what is happening on the screen, so it is necessary to watch these little cartoons, listening carefully to the musical accompaniment. In almost all of these works, Artemyev is multifaceted and it is possible to hear both characteristic classical works performed with an orchestra and significant fragments with electronic music.

The first work in the new studio was *Нарисовать начало* (*Draw the Beginning*) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yrqs4sb6rU>) - a story about the adventures of two little people - a boy and a girl - drawn on a school blackboard between mathematical formulas and an evil rag that mercilessly erases everything. In defence of the little people, the crayon began to build fences and barriers on the blackboard to protect them. Bella Akhmadulina's poems, recited by the author, sound from the entire text in the picture. Most of the music is modern classical, but in dynamic scenes the composer uses electronic inserts.

The next work was the philosophical parable *Живая вода* (*Vital Water*) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3yrqs4sb6rU>), released in 1977. The story is about the relationship between man and nature, about their inseparable connection, with the addition of a light fantasy note in the spirit of Bradbury. It is already a story told entirely in the language of music. Once again, we can distinguish only insignificant inclusions of electronic music in the general framework. But they are responsible for something fantastic happening on the screen.

The following year, Artemyev wrote music for 11 films! Among them are two animated films. While the first, «Самолётик» ("Small Airplane"), is of little interest in the aspect we are considering, the second, "Legends of the Peruvian Indians" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spQOOVqQQmzw>), is one of the most unusual combinations of Amerindian mythology and electronic music, a variant of what is now called tribal music. The world in which the action takes place is divided into the inhabitants of the sky (gods) and the inhabitants of the earth (humans). But there were also demigods—twin brothers raised by a wise frog. The story tells of the people's struggle with monsters of the earth, the sea and magic weapons.



To create the music, Artemyev engaged the ensemble 'Boomerang', which will be mentioned later. The unusual animation combined with the equally unusual musical accompaniment leaves a overlasting impression. In this work, it is the electronic sound that dominates the overall musical theme. Again, the electronic sound prevails in the dynamic moments of the cartoon, but there are also slow fragments when the ambient replaces the tribal.

This unusual picture marked the composer's return to the "Soyuzmultfilm" studio and the beginning of a fruitful collaboration with Vladimir Pekar', one of the outstanding Soviet directors and creators of animated films.

In 1979, again at the "Ekran" studio, two animated films were released—*Девочка и дельфин* (*The Girl and the Dolphin*) and *Герон* (*Geron*). *The Girl and the Dolphin* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_yNlrf-DjY8)—a drawn animated film, a poetic study of the friendship between a girl and a dolphin. The girl loved the sea but could not swim, so every day she came to the shore and just played ball. Once a wave hit her and she was almost swept out to sea, but the dolphin helped her and pulled her out of the water. Thus began their friendship. Behind this simple story lies a deep sense of romance and moral purity. The whole film is again represented only by the musical component. As in previous works, the composer makes full use of his arsenal. Logically, the film can be divided into two parts. The relationship between two creatures: a girl and a dolphin. Subtle and unusual experiences that the composer has expressed through the strangeness of electronic music. Unusual sounds, somewhat reminiscent of the sounds produced by dolphins, indicate a dialogue between the two. The second part is represented by the contact with the outside world that surrounds them. Beautiful classical music with a poignant final song. And a seemingly non-fantasy cartoon plays up the mysterious facet of "contact". The same, second, third and more meaningful content that distinguished Soviet animation for adults.

While preparing this material, I looked at the author's material from a different point of view, and the cartoon *Geron* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KW4Q9KuIwKE>) is probably the most unusual of all. A simple story about an inventor who was ahead of his time with his discoveries. The actual story takes about five minutes. The rest is a kind of experimental work to complement the animation. The whole 5-minute overture of experimental graphics, pop-art cutting and some futuristic sound opens the image, which the authors think symbolises progress and movement into the future. It is closed by a similar section of about the same length. In fact, it turned out to be a clip of electronic music. And if you look at it that way, it looks very modern for its time. Once again, the fantastic is heavily veiled here and can be seen as a variant of alternative history. Such an unusual image it turned out to be.

The following year brought two more animated works, for which Artemyev was the composer. The first was the already mentioned and better known film *Baba Yaga contrary*, a rather simplified electro-pop, understandable for most. The second work was an animated film about a boy, Tim, who was very afraid of the dark - until one day Night herself invited him to her *Ночь рождения* (*Night of Birth*) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQzcxYY7Rxl>). This work combines puppetry and drawn animation. A fan-

tastic fairy tale with a weak video sequence. But if you are prepared to listen only to the musical accompaniment, you will find a concentrated feast of different electronic directions. The composer has tried to reveal and show all his skills, talents and abilities in relation to the released 15 minutes. All compositions from this cartoon can be found on the disk <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D1%87-2/1631379184> *Anthology. Part 2.*

Another year and two more works, *Недобрая Ладо»* ("The Unkind Lado") and *Говорящие руки Траванкора* (*The Talking Hands of Travancore*). Both works are based on mythological stories of the peoples of the world. The cartoon "Talking Hands of Travancore" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3mzdXY25Mko>) is the second in the series of "ethnographic films" by Vladimir Pekar'. This time the plot is taken from Indian mythology. The construction of the film is fully consistent with the first film - graphic solution stylized as Indian painting and a combination of experimental and classical music. Unfortunately, the author could not find separately published compositions, so you can get an idea by familiarizing yourself with the cartoon.



Unkind Lado is based on Far Eastern folklore. The girl Lado was born a beauty, but she did not want to work and everything was not to her liking. She dispersed grooms, left her mother and flew to other lands to look for pure people. Actually in this picture the composer did not depart from the already found scheme of combination of classical

and electronic music. compositions from this cartoon can be found on the disk <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/%D0%B0%D0%BD%D1%82%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B3%D0%B8%D1%8F-%D1%87-3/1631323930> *Anthology. Part 3*

In 1982, the third installment of "ethnographic" films, *Закон племени* (*Tribal Law*) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y79dfnBwPVA>), was released. Cartoon based on the works of African poets and artists of the Poto-Poto school. Far away in Africa, where the equator covers the hot belt of the earth, live amazing tribes that created the painting of Poto-Poto. The women are the keepers of the hearth, cooking for the men and bearing children while the men go hunting. From childhood, they are taught to run fast and climb trees, and when boys grow up, they are solemnly initiated as hunters. And then boys and girls choose a mate. But to get a wife, a young hunter must kill a beast and throw it at the feet of his chosen one. One of the lovers has waited a long time for this day. But the hunter-gatherer has pity and cannot kill the mother of the young leopard... This work repeats the structure already used, as in other cartoons of the series. The cartoons that continued the series, were made according to the same

scheme *Путь в вечность* (*The Path to Eternity*, 1983) (Korean poetry), *То ли птица, то ли зверь* (*Either a Bird or a Beast*, 1984) (Mongolian folklore), *Загадка сфинкса* (*The Riddle of the Sphinx*, 1985). (frescoes of ancient Egypt). In each of these works, unique combinations of conventional and electronic music were created to convey a fantastic story.

Before the early 90's this union managed to create three more animated works, which also sounded electronic music Artemyev, but they represented the processing of fairy tales and for adult audiences of little interest.



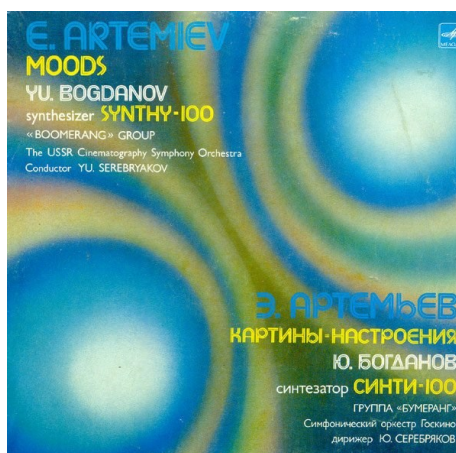
Of course, Artemyev's activities as part of the band "Boomerang" deserve a special mention.

The album <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/%D0%BA%D0%B0%D1%80%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%BD%D1%8B-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%81%D1%82%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B5%D0%BD%D0%B8%D1%8F/1069858914> *Moods*, released in 1984, features a total of 13 short electronic pieces played with the Synthi-100 synthesiser, the "Boomerang" band and the

Goskino Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Yuri Serebryakov. The record contains both mesmerising space music and more outlandish things, close to kraut-experiments.

"Vocal and symphonic suite on poems by Yuri Rytkheu (who wrote in both his native Chukchi and in Russian) for the band "Boomerang" and soloist Zhanna Rozhdestvenskaya by Eduard Artemyev <https://music.apple.com/ru/album/warmth-of-earth/359365398>]"Warmth of the Earth" was recorded on label "Melodiya" in 1985. As a music critic wrote: "In the nine-part cycle written for the generally traditional rock band line-up as well as the powerful Synthi-100, the composer managed to reveal the deep poetic meaning of Yuri Rytkheu's poems telling about love, the existence of man and nature as a single living organism in the boundless cosmic space, the primordiality of the most ancient legends and tales from which the modern artist draws inspiration". And it was one of the first attempts to record compositions combining elements of electronic and ethnic music. The album was reissued twice abroad by solid progressive labels: in 1999—on French "Musea" and in 2009—on Japanese "Belle Antique".

Some of the author's compositions are so unusual that although they were written for non-fantastic films, they could well sound in a fantastic film. Probably the most vivid example of such a composition is the composition *Поход* (*Hike*) from the movie



Сибиряда (*Sibiriada*). In 1999, the Russian electronic band PPK released a remake called "Resurrection" or "ResuRection". The https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNGu_tRuQHs video clip created for this composition is entirely based on the theme of "space flight". The instrumental electronic trance style composition was the first musical composition from Russia or the USSR to enter the official hit parade in the UK and a number of other countries.

Artemyev's composer activities have been recognised with numerous awards. He was the most titled "electronic musician" in Soviet and Russian music. Eduard Artemyev had a completely unique creative path that made him an incomparable master. His music is part of the golden fund of Soviet cinema, it is firmly embedded in cultural life and is still heard today. Unfortunately, Eduard Artemyev's contribution as an innovator, pioneer of electronic music and initiator of bold experiments is much less known and honoured. In this article I have tried to talk a little about it and share my knowledge, which I have managed to enrich myself with since I started to deepen my knowledge of science fiction and electronical music.



The “Music” of Piotr Zak

By Chris Garcia

The BBC sometimes lies. It’s OK, though, because it is usually for a good cause. Sometimes, that cause is entertainment, and sometimes it’s to prove uppity music critics wrong for liking stuff that the untrained, or just plain stubborn, either don’t or can’t understand. In 1961, two BBC Radio presenters invented a composer, and played a piece from him that was, to put it bluntly, awful. The thing is, and what they absolutely missed at the time, is that in doing so, they created music.

Hold on for a bit, because there’s a lot here before I get to the Philosophy of Art and Music stuff that’s gonna be the backbone.

The whole thing starts with a guy named Karlheinz Stockhausen. The guy was a mad genius who was very interested in both the Cage-ian concept of music and sound (or lack thereof) being interchangeable as well as the possibilities of electronics, and especially tape. This was before the founding of the San Francisco Tape Music Center that really changed the way people saw music and electronics. Stockhausen was experimenting with electronics as early as the 1950s, and would even start to look into Computer Music, though not quite yet.

Now, his compositions are, let us say, an acquired taste. They are often composed of feedback, buzzing, atonal noise, at least to the uninitiated. They are compositions that are not meant to be pleasing, nor strident, but to explore the possibility of composition, music, and sound itself. Some of it I’m way into, but a lot of it I’m just not. I kinda jumped in with both feet when the first thing I listened to was a 1969 recording called *Aus den Sieben Tagen*. It’s not easy, but after a while, I finally got it and started kinda feeling the sounds.

Now, the BBC had two producers, Hans Keller and Susan Bradshaw, who wanted to test something: could they produce a piece of random noise and have it taken seriously as music. To do so, they had a means of distributing the piece, the BBC radio, but they also had to come up with a backstory for the piece because Music just doesn’t compose (and perform) itself. Thus, they chose a Polish composer, Piotr Zak, to be the star. That he didn’t exist isn’t important. They write up a full-ish concept for the composer that the presenter of the program read:

Piotr Zak, who is of Polish extraction but lives in Germany, was born in 1939. His earliest works are conservative, but he has recently come under the influence of Stockhausen and John Cage. This work for tape and percussion was written between May and September of last year. Within the precise and complex framework defined by the score, there is considerable room for improvisation.

So, that’s a pretty solid Hoax layout. The guy’s from out-of-town, and in the early 1960s, Poland may well have been so far out of the British experience as Timbuktu.



The path to noise is documented as a falling under the influence of two Svengali, which is what many musical critics were saying was happening to the young generation of composers (which would have included the likes of John Adams and Philip Glass, though he'd still have been driving cabs at the time) and they added the improvisation bit to throw a needless detail that some could point to as proof this was real.

The piece was random percussion and whistling, which was supposed to be the sound of the tape. The 'performers' were Claude Tessier and Anton Schmidt, both did not exist as it was Bradshaw and Keller that did all the performing. It was loud and annoying and random.

And it didn't work.

All three of the reporters who covered it said that it was terrible, even ones who regularly supported and trumpeted new music by the likes of Stockhausen. They savaged it as non-musical, which means that they were denying what Bradshaw and Keller were trying to prove.

But they were even more wrong because what they did was compose music...but that wouldn't be obvious until a few years later when Fluxus came.

Fluxus says that art is, or at least can be, anywhere and anything. While it is easy to say that a pretty picture is art, it is hard to encounter a crumpled mass of ivy and call it art, but that was what Fluxus was doing. It was a dismissal of forms of art while maintaining the presentation of the arts. One of the best known pieces of Fluxus Sound Art, Yoko Ono's flushing of a toilet, is exactly what Bradshaw and Keller had done. Yoko had no more control over the sound produced by pushing the lever than Bradshaw and Keller did by randomly hitting percussion. In essence, they had created a work of Sound Art in place of a musical composition, but Fluxus proponents would say the two are indistinguishable.

Zak is not the only Hoaxed musician, though. In fact, there's a book that rides the line of Hoax and fiction in a way that I found fascinating. *An Incomplete History of the Art of Funerary Violin* is an incredible concept. It is an incredible work of non-fiction that just happens to be entirely lies.

The thing about reading it is that it all makes sense, has footnotes, and references that seem to make a whole lot of sense. It was from 2006, and there was a joy in it that I can not fully discuss. It was amazing reading, exactly what I wanted from a piece of literature, and moreover, it was really well written.

But the presentation was pitch perfect! It easily could have been pitched as a hoax, but it wasn't. I can remember a segment on NPR, I think that's where I first heard about it, that approached it as if Funerary Violin was a real thing, which it is not, and then at some point the author was asked, "So, is this all real?" and the author said no.

That, of course, is the difference. Had the author just said "Oh yeah, totally. So underreported." and went with it, that would have been an exceptional fake. In the case of Piotr Zak, they eventually came clean, and a few of the reviewers caught 'em out on it, saying that this was clearly a random collection of sounds instead of an actual composition.

And THAT is what bugs me the most.

You see, looking at the Zak piece in the Fluxus context, it doesn't matter if it was a random collection of sounds, or if it was meant only as a joke or hoax. It was created with the intention of creating a work. Whatever the intention of the work doesn't impact the fact that there was intention in its creation, which would make it art. Good art, probably not, but art none the less.

Sometimes, Hoaxes come true.

A Closing Note

By Ann Gry

Thank you for reading this issue!

We had another issue before on fictional music instruments, and wanted to start a broader conversation about music. We had a lot of exciting ideas flowing around, and we hope to continue music issues in the future. So if you have something to say, start writing and sending us your pieces, marking the emails with 'FUTURE MUSIC' in the subject.

Some ideas we had, for your inspiration:

1. Music within works & music as worldbuilding. Almost every society will have music of some type, but the mechanisms and scales and instruments will vary. Same with the use of epic songs, like epic tales, to recount histories. How do writers take this into account when `w o r l d b u i l d i n g ?`

2. What about visual art created to directly represent music, as opposed to the music as background energy? (Or, conversely, music created to represent visual art?).

3. I wonder if there's anything around synaesthesia, particularly people writing of their own experiences with it, for example, if they then use it as its own creative impulse.

4. Music highlights from Fandom & Conventions; your favourite moments to share.

5. Genre Rock Operas, Concept albums & Musicals.

6. Soundtracks to all the media, TV, films, anime, games...

7. Our favourites—this is the platform to share your love and spread your enthusiasm, so we crave personal vehement stories!

For those reading during the holiday season—Happy New Year! To many more!

