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# EDITORIAL

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It seems quite natural to dedicate a volume of *Organised Sound* to *musique concrète* and to the *Groupe de Recherches Musicales* (GRM) with its long and rich history and perspectives. Almost sixty years have passed since the invention of ‘*musique concrète*’; this initial act which, preceded by numerous explorations since the invention of electricity, opened the road to the expansion of music to include all the possible sounds known to man. We are also about to celebrate the GRM’s fiftieth birthday.

An outstanding figure emerges from the compilation of articles – Pierre Schaeffer, the inventor of the term ‘*musique concrète*’ and its first pioneer. He was the initiator of what is called a *Revolution*, a *Transformation*, or an *Evolution*, depending on the point of view and the implication of who uses the term. His name is closely associated with the initial discovery and with the institutions that continued his impulse, but it is mainly associated with the development of *musical research*. When undertaking sonic explorations, he decided that his invention would involve much more than musical minds. Technicians were needed to invent new tools, psychologists to understand how musical sense is created in our minds, musical analysts to explore a completely new music and experimentalists to try out these new possibilities. As a man of the Renaissance with knowledge covering several fields, he constructed an institution with multiple aims and indicated the road to follow in order to achieve both creation and comprehension.

Surprisingly enough, he lost interest in his invention and, after almost twenty years, moved on towards other domains related to communication. This abdication was to offer a free path for younger generations, no more under the control of a ‘master’, who adapted, modified and reinvented his discoveries. Pierre Schaeffer was the gardener who prepared the earth and distributed the seeds, that, sixty years later, the following generations have harvested with new concepts and technological tools.

The first three articles in this volume explore and present the varied origins, the implications and some of the history of the ‘*musique concrète*’ movement. Marc Battier clearly explains the context in which it was developed and how the cultural community and society received Schaeffer’s ideas and the resultant activities of the GRM. Évelyne Gayou offers a historical overview of the GRM’s evolution and perspectives from an

insider’s point of view. Daniel Teruggi, director of GRM since 1997, explains in detail the technological evolution of the GRM in close relation to the evolution of concepts and application.

Then François Bayle, for thirty-one years also director of the GRM, and one of the major contributors to the evolution of ideas, explains his views on acousmatic, space and sound-images, concepts which have had significant impact on younger generations. François Delalande provides a more sociological view on musical analysis and electroacoustic music applied to pedagogy and to musical creation.

Two articles enter into greater detail concerning sound and music. The first one by Jean-Christophe Thomas explains how *musique concrète* and its following denominations, electroacoustic music and acousmatic music, explore natural sounds while proposing a classification scheme rich with examples. Philippe Mion has written an analysis of an emblematic work by Christian Zanési that uses the voice of Pierre Schaeffer.

The GRM today, while still embracing many of its initial concepts, is an institution that has continuously evolved its perspective and adapted its objectives to the evolution of technology and of society. The Internet and electronica or electronic music are amongst the main tendencies today. Solange Barrachina and Dominique Saint Martin describe the way contents can be offered to today’s users in an interactive way thus creating a strong sense of exchange and a greater ability to achieve wider contributions; Christian Zanési offers an interesting perspective on why musicians need institutions such as the GRM. Finally, a recommended bibliography provides a list of key publications for further reading and reference.

Pierre Schaeffer was always fairly critical of academic research related to his work; today the situation has completely changed. The GRM works closely with several universities around the world and is a founding member of the Electroacoustic Musical Studies Network as a means of promoting further discussion about the past and present concepts regarding sound, space and musical analysis. Interest in this field is rising rapidly and researchers and composers feel free and welcome today to participate in what once may have seemed to be a restricted domain. Currently it has become a domain of interest and study that contributes to the richness and diversity of contemporary musical thought.

David Rose has translated the vast majority of the articles in this volume.

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*Organised Sound* has frequently called on specialist guest editors to co-ordinate its issues. In the current issue, we have taken this one step further and invited the GRM's director to curate an issue celebrating sixty years of musique concrète and fifty years of the GRM. Many readers of the journal will have frequently heard the question, 'Why is so little information available in English about Schaeffer, musique concrète and Francophone acousmatic theory as well as the GRM?'

We are therefore proud to start, belatedly, the process of making this rich and important history available in English. As Daniel Teruggi rightly states, the GRM is a highly dynamic institution. As it celebrates its half-century birthday, *Organised Sound* raises its glass to the next exciting fifty years of pioneering work in all aspects of electroacoustic music emanating from the GRM and the next sixty years of the music of sounds for which Pierre Schaeffer played such an important role.

This issue, as is the case with all December-number 3 issues, includes the volume's DVD and also includes the DVD contents in print. This disk can be played on a DVD player as well as on a computer.

Leigh Landy  
Editor  
*Organised Sound*