

BILL DIETZ

LINER NOTES
(or, MARINA ROSENFELD LOVES YOU)

1.

THE 6 TRACKS THAT MAKE UP MARINA ROSENFELD'S *P.A. / HARD LOVE* (FEATURING WARRIOR QUEEN) NEITHER DOCUMENT THE NAMESAKE SERIES OF INSTALLATIONS (*P.A.* [2009-2012]¹) NOR COALESCE INTO A NEATLY INDEPENDENT, SELF-CONTAINED ENTITY. THE INDIVIDUAL TRACKS SEEM FORMULATED AS EXCERPTS, BUT FROM A WHOLE THAT NEVER WAS. THEY ARE SYNTHETIC: BRINGING TOGETHER ALL MANNER OF MATERIALS (LIVE, RECORDED, RE-RECORDED, COMMISSIONED, SIMULATED) ORBITING – OR NOT – THE *P.A.* WORK COMPLEX. THESE MATERIALS CIRCULATE IN TURN IN VARYING COMBINATIONS AND AT VARYING DEGREES OF ABSTRACTION THROUGHOUT THE TRACKS.

SUCH CONTRADICTIONS ARE ENTIRELY IN KEEPING WITH THE STATUS OF THE THREE *P.A.* ITERATIONS AS A WORK AT ALL – ITERATIONS WHOSE COMMONALITY IS LIKEWISE COMPLEX (SHARING LITTLE MORE THAN PARTICULAR LOUDSPEAKERS, OCCURRENCE IN LARGE SPACES, AND EACH INCLUDING A LIVE, IMPROVISED PERFORMANCE BY OKKYUNG LEE). THIS HESITANCE TO BE A WORK IS SPECIFIC TO ROSENFELD'S INSISTENCE UPON A PARTICULAR MODE OF KNOWING INHERENT TO THE SONIC: SOUND'S OPACITY AS A SENSUAL INTERSTICE. PETER ABLINGER METONOMIZES THIS OPACITY IN HIS OPERAS AND WORKS SUCH AS *ALTAR* (2003) AND *MEHR WIRKLICHKEIT 3* (2002).² VIA ABLINGER, THE QUESTION OF THE MUSICAL OBJECT – OF A DYNAMIC PSYCHO-PHYSICAL PROCESS BECOMING A

¹ THE FIRST VERSION WAS PRESENTED AT THE PARK AVENUE ARMORY IN 2009, THE SECOND IN 2010 AT THE LIVERPOOL BIENNIAL IN A PARKING GARAGE, AND THE THIRD IN AARHUS, DENMARK IN 2012.

² WORKS CONSTITUTED BY THE RADICAL DISPARITY OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL PARTS. *ALTAR*, FOR EXAMPLE, CONSISTS OF A SOUND INSTALLATION IN URBAN SPACE, A STUDY FOR CELLO AND ELECTRONICS, AND A COMPOSITION FOR LARGE ORCHESTRA. EACH COMPONENT OF THE WHOLE OCCURS AT A DISTINCT TIME AND PLACE.

WORK – INSISTS ON A 'READY-MAKING' IN THE EAR AND MIND OF THE LISTENING SUBJECT: A PERFORMATIVE ACT OF COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE DEMARCATION. SOUND'S 'PARERGONAL' SPECIFICITY IS THEREFORE INSEPARABLE FROM A PERCIPIENT'S TEMPORALLY CONSTITUTED AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE. AS SUCH, THINKING AND SPEAKING THE SONIC REQUIRE A FUNDAMENTAL ACT OF TRANSLATION VIS-À-VIS DISCOURSES OF OBJECT-BASED EXTERIORITY.

AND YET, AS THOUGH THE MIND WERE NOT A MUSCLE, THE IDEALIST, ANALYTIC CONCEPTUALIST EMPHASIS GIVEN TO THE "NON-RETINAL" TURN TO "MODES OF EMIGRATION FROM THE CENTER TO THE FRAME, FROM *ERGON* TO *PARERGA*"³ IN SETH KIM-COHEN'S RECENT STUDY OF THE SONIC ARTS NOT ONLY ELIDES THIS SPECIFIC MEDIAL RESIDUE OF THINKING SOUND, BUT ALLOWS AN ENTIRE POST-CAGEAN GENERATION (ASHLEY, AMACHER, OLIVEROS, YOUNG – A GENERATION ALREADY APPROACHING, WITH ADMITTEDLY MIXED SUCCESS, ITS OWN NON-ESSENTIALIST CONCEPTIONS OF THE SONIC) TO ALL BUT GO MISSING. DAN GRAHAM: "THE SOUND IS MATERIAL. [...] THE CRITIQUE OF MINIMALISM THROUGH SAN FRANCISCO MUSIC [...] WAS BASED ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SPECTATOR'S PERCEPTUAL PROCESS."⁴ MORE THAN A NOVEL QUALITY OF THIS PARTICULAR MUSIC, THIS "INTRODUCTION" SIGNALLED A TURN TO A CONSIDERATION OF SOUND'S POTENTIALLY INHERENT 'DIFFERENTIAL SPECIFICITY' IN DIRECT OPPOSITION TO FURTHER MODES OF THINKING 'SOUND AS TEXT' (WHETHER POST-STRUCTURALIST, RELIGIOUS, RITUAL, OR IN SCIENTIFIC NARRATIVES OF UNIVERSAL GRAMMARS AND THE NEUROLOGICAL). IN HIS "LECTURE ON NOTHING," JOHN CAGE WRITES, "OUR POETRY NOW IS THE REALIZATION THAT WE POSSESS NOTHING."⁵ THESE (ALBEIT SCARCE) EXTANT "NON-COCHLEAR" AND YET DECISIVELY MATERIALIST PRAXES MIGHT BE DESCRIBED AS A RECKONING WITH THIS

³ SETH KIM-COHEN, *IN THE BLINK OF AN EAR: TOWARD A NON-COCHLEAR SONIC ART* (NEW YORK & LONDON: CONTINUUM, 2009), p.246

⁴ FROM AN INTERVIEW WITH ERIC DE BRUYN IN *GREY ROOM 17*, FALL 2004, p.112

⁵ AS REPRINTED IN *SILENCE: LECTURES AND WRITINGS BY JOHN CAGE*, (MIDDLETOWN: WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1961), p.110

REMARK – WITH THE QUESTION OF THE MUSICAL WORK AND SOUND AS COMMODITY IN THE WAKE OF MODERNIST ‘DISPOSSESSION.’

IN KEEPING WITH THIS SPECULATIVE LINEAGE, ROSENFELD PLAYS ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN “P.A.” (PUBLIC ADDRESS ITSELF) AND A “P.A.” (THE MECHANISM, A FORMALIZED STRUCTURE FOR ARTICULATING “P.A.” IN THE FIRST SENSE). THE TENSION BETWEEN SAYING (TRANSMITTING INFORMATION) AND ‘BEING SAID’ IN SAYING (THE IDEOLOGICAL CONTENT OF THE FORM OF ADDRESS) IS THE PIVOT OF THE ENTIRE SERIES OF *P.A.* INSTALLATIONS. FAR FROM THE IDEALIZED “PUBLIC SPHERE” OF 19TH CENTURY VIENNESE COFFEE HOUSES, THE HORN LOUDSPEAKERS THAT ‘CONSTITUTE’ ONE OF THE FEW CONSTANTS IN THE SERIES ARE RELICS OF PUBLIC ADDRESS’ DENIGRATION INTO INFORMATIONAL INSTRUMENTALITY (PUBLIC ADDRESS AS MALL CLOSING TIME ANNOUNCEMENT, MEDIUM FOR ADVERTISING, EMERGENCY BROADCAST). RATHER THAN PROJECTING A CONCILIATORY FANTASY OF A RETURN TO PUBLICNESS, ROSENFELD’S INSTALLATIONS OFFER SELF-REFLEXIVE SITUATIONS IN WHICH THE INTERPELLATIVE STRUCTURE OF PUBLIC ADDRESS ITSELF BECOMES AUDIBLE.

AS SUCH, THE *P.A. / HARD LOVE* TRACKS AT ONCE REPRESENT A CONTINUATION OF THIS PROJECT – HERE RECALIBRATED TO UNDERLINE INTERPELLATIVE FORMS OF ANONYMOUS ADDRESS INHERENT IN THE ‘ALBUM’ FORM – AS WELL AS ITS POTENTIAL SUBLATION (AS ALREADY HINTED AT IN THE 2012 DANISH ITERATION OF THE INSTALLATION). THE PRESENCE HERE OF WARRIOR QUEEN IS KEY. WARRIOR QUEEN’S FUNCTION IS DISTINCT FROM THAT OF LEE, WHOSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INSTALLATIONS (AS WELL AS HER STRONG PRESENCE ON THE DIGITAL TRACKS) ARE RATHER EXTENSIONS OR AMPLIFICATIONS OF ROSENFELD’S. ROSENFELD AND WARRIOR QUEEN OCCUPY POSITIONS IN SEMANTICALLY DISTINCT, HISTORICALLY APPORTIONED MUSICAL FIELDS. BOTH WORK IN RELATION TO THE GIVEN BOUNDS AND CONVENTIONS OF THESE DOMAINS, SPEAKING THROUGH LANGUAGES AND

FORMATS WHICH PRECEDE THEM. THEIR ALLIANCE IS A PERHAPS UNEXPECTED SYNTACTICAL LINK BETWEEN THEIR RESPECTIVE ‘GENRES’: THAT BOTH EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC (AT LEAST THE FLEETING DEVELOPMENT OF IT THAT I MENTION ABOVE)⁶ AND DUB-BASED MUSICS ASSUME THE FOUNDATION OF THE MUSICAL TO BE THE SUBJECTIVE, APPROPRIATIVE CONSTITUTION OF A SONIC “SOMETHING” (A WORK, COMMODITY, ENTITY) IN LISTENERS’ RECEPTION. HERE, A DUB PRODUCER AND A LISTENER TO 4’33’’ WOULD MOVE CLOSE TO ALIGNMENT. DIEDRICH DIEDERICHSEN:

AS EARLY AS THE DUB STUDIOS OF JAMAICA AND THE TURNTABLES OF THE FIRST HIP-HOP DJs, AND CERTAINLY SINCE THE DIGITIZATION OF ALL SOUNDS, EVERY MUSICAL PRODUCTION HAS SIMULTANEOUSLY BEEN A POTENTIAL PART OF ITS NEXT APPROPRIATION. [...] THE CONTINUING ATTEMPT TO MAKE MUSIC A COMMODITY AND TO SUSTAIN ITS COMMODITY NATURE CANNOT BE PINNED SOLELY ON ITS OBJECTHOOD; RATHER, IT MUST RELY ON QUITE DIFFERENT, OFTEN REPRESSIVE MEASURES THAT CAN NO LONGER BE CAMOUFLAGED AS INHERENT TO ART.⁷

AMONG THESE REPRESSIVE MEASURES ARE NOT ONLY TECHNICAL MECHANISMS SUCH AS COMMERCIAL OR INDUSTRIAL “P.A.” SYSTEMS (OR, FOR THAT MATTER, STANDARDIZED CD & INSTALLATION FORMATS), BUT ALSO FORMS OF ADDRESS – IN THIS CASE ‘STYLES’ OF MUSIC (CODES OF REPETITION AND DIFFERENCE THAT FACILITATE DISCERNMENT AND IDENTIFICATION). THE

⁶ STRICTLY SPEAKING, THE MOMENT OF EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC REFERRED TO HERE IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE MONIKER OF “GENRE.” ONE MUST DISTINGUISH BETWEEN TWO SIMULTANEOUS MOMENTS: ONE PARTICIPATING IN THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF A CRITICAL ARTISTIC PRACTICE, AND ANOTHER PARTICIPATING IN THE REIFICATION OF THE SAME AS A NICHE-MARKET PRODUCT (IN WHICH THE GESTURAL TROPES OF MODERNISM HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO EXOTIC TERMS IN A NORMATIVE SYNTAX).

⁷ FROM HIS “CONCEPTUAL MUSIC,” IN *THE ABUSE OF MUSIC AND PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY: THE WONDERFUL MUSICAL UNIVERSE OF THE CONDUCTOR, COMPOSER, AND PRODUCER CHRISTIAN VON BORRIES* (BERLIN: MASSE UND MACHT, 2007), P. 25-26.

INTRACTABILITY OF SPEAKING THROUGH A HISTORICALLY DETERMINED LANGUAGE OF ANOTHER – WHETHER THAT BE THE STYLIZED REMNANTS OF MODERNIST ELECTRONIC MUSIC OR THE SOMETIMES VIOLENTLY HETEROEONORMATIVE CODES OF DUB – IS THE FUNDAMENTAL CONDITION OF PUBLIC ADDRESS AND THE SUBJECT OF ROSENFELD’S *P.A.* WORKS. AS SUCH, ONE MIGHT RECOGNIZE A CERTAIN MINOR *DÉTOURNEMENT* IN ROSENFELD’S EMPHASIS OF WARRIOR QUEEN’S REPEATED, “I WANNA SCREAM OUT LOUD.”

2.

IN TWO PAIRS OF TRACKS – ‘ABSTRACTLY’ IN TRACKS 3 AND 4, AND ‘VOCALLY’ IN 2 AND 5 – *P.A. / HARD LOVE* EXPLORES THE POTENTIAL REVERSIBILITY OF A GIVEN SEMANTIC FIELD. THESE TRAVERSALS HINGE UPON REALIGNING DEGREES OF PERIODICITY OR OCCURRENCE OF GIVEN LEXICAL AND NON-LEXICAL SEMANTIC ELEMENTS. IN THE *BLADERUNNER*-ESQUE MARCH OF THE 3RD TRACK, A SIMPLE ELECTRONIC PULSE FORCIBLY DE-CONTEXTUALIZES APERIODIC ELECTRONIC & ACOUSTIC (CELLO – LEE) GESTURES AND GLISSANDI. EVEN AS IT LITERALLY FADES IN AND OUT OF AUDIBILITY, EVEN AFTER THE VOICE’S “ATTACK,” THE BEAT’S INTERPELLATION OF PERIODICITY (OMINOUSLY?) REMAINS WITH US. TRACK 5 WORKS INVERSELY: OVERTLY APERIODIC, ‘FORMLESS,’ THE PRIMARY DISCERNIBLE ‘RHYTHM’ BEING THAT OF SPACES CUTTING THROUGH EACH OTHER – THE COLLAPSING OF VIRTUAL SPACES. HERE, EVEN TRACES OF THE EMINENTLY PERIODIC (ALICIA KEYS’ “EMPIRE STATE OF MIND” ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE NOISE FLOOR) SERVE TO ARTICULATE A META-APERIODICITY.

ON THE OTHER HAND, THE PRESENCE OF KEYS (RE-RECORDED IN DOMESTIC SPACE – A RECORDING OF A LISTENING) AS WELL AS THE RECURRING PRESENCE OF ROSENFELD’S OWN VOICE (IN SO MANY OF THE TRACKS) SUGGESTS THE OUTLINE OF A LONG TRANSMISSION CHAIN THAT MAKES THE FUNDAMENTAL REVERSALS OF THE 2ND AND 5TH TRACKS POSSIBLE. ALONG AN AXIS UPON WHICH SINGING-ALONG IS PERCEPTION IS RECEPTION IS TRANSMISSION IS APPROPRIATION IS

CREATION, THE TWO ARTISTS APPROACH ONE ANOTHER. IN THE 2ND TRACK, ROSENFELD CARVES OUT A SPACE IN WHICH WARRIOR QUEEN BECOMES ANNETTE HENRY. BOOKENDED BY THE SUNG REFRAIN AND ACCOMPANIED BY ROSENFELD’S PROJECTION OF AN IMMENSE, SEEMINGLY IMPLOSIVE POINTILLIST SPACE, THE RHYTHMIC CONVENTIONS TYPICAL OF DUB RECEDE AND HENRY’S RECITATION INSTEAD TAKES ON THE POETIC CONVENTIONS OF A LAMENT. IN THE 5TH TRACK, ROSENFELD LIKEWISE MOMENTARILY REORIENTS THE PARTS OF HER OWN ‘SPEECH’ IN SYNCHRONY WITH WARRIOR QUEEN’S THEN FULLY CONVENTIONALLY RHYTHMICIZED RECITATION. ELECTRONIC COMPONENTS FROM ROSENFELD’S VOCABULARY HEARD UP UNTIL NOW AS APERIODIC OR QUASI-PERIODIC ARE PULLED TOGETHER INTO RHYTHMIC COMPONENTS OF ANOTHER CODE AND GRIND.

BEYOND THE QUASI-CAGEAN “INTERPENETRATION WITHOUT OBSTRUCTION” OF THE FIRST TRACK AND VARIOUS SIMILAR MOMENTS THROUGHOUT THE ‘ALBUM’ (AND CERTAINLY FAR BEYOND CAGE’S SIMPLY SHARING THE STAGE WITH SUN RA ON CONEY ISLAND), THESE ENERGETIC TRAVERSALS INTO REVERSAL DO INDEED INSIST ON A MOVE TOWARD ARTICULATING THE STRUCTURE OF A FIELD RATHER THAN THE MOMENTARY PLAYS UPON IT – BUT ONLY AND SPECIFICALLY AS THIS IDIOSYNCRATICALLY FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE SONIC REALM. IN THE FINAL TRACK, WARRIOR QUEEN IS ABSENT AND AMBIENT SOUND FROM THE LIVERPOOL INSTALLATION COMES TO THE FORE. HERE, THE PERSISTENT PRESENCE OF SUCH ‘CONCRETE’ SOUND THROUGHOUT THE TRACKS (OFTEN TOWARD THEIR ENDS) COMES TO A HEAD. ANNOUNCED BY THE THREAT OF RASTERISATION IN ROSENFELD’S “TICK-TOCKS,” THESE AMBIENT RECORDINGS ARE MORE AND MORE ENMESHED, AESTHETICIZED, AND INTERWOVEN WITH THE SYNTHESIZED SOUNDS ALONGSIDE THEM (THAT IS, ASSIMILATED AS ‘MUSIC’). IN THE TRACK’S LAST MINUTE, ROSENFELD SURGICALLY DEPLOYS A DRASTIC CUT-IN OF ELECTRONIC SWEEPS (MATERIAL WE’VE HEARD ELSEWHERE, BUT NOT WITH THIS FORCE). HERE, IN THE FACE OF A FURTHER CODIFICATION, ANOTHER

‘GENREFICATION’: AN AUTHENTICALLY NEGATIVE
GESTURE. THE BEING-SPOKEN-FOR-IN-SPEAKING OF ONE
CODE IS VIOLENTLY BROKEN THROUGH WITH A
STRATEGIC SPEECH ACT OF ANOTHER.

TRACING THE MOVE TOWARD THE ARTICULATION OF A
RELATION TO THE OTHER BEYOND OR AT LEAST
CONSCIOUS OF THAT OF THE OBJECT/COMMODITY/WORK,
JUDITH BUTLER WRITES:

HEGEL LETS US KNOW [...] THAT HE SEEKS A
CONDITION IN WHICH “THE INFINITE GRIEF
AND WHOLE GRAVITY OF THE [SPIRIT’S]
DISCORD IS ACKNOWLEDGED.” DISCORD?
DISQUIET? INTERESTINGLY, THE IDEA OF AN
AESTHETIC FORM ANIMATED AND ANIMATING IS
NOT ONE THAT OVERCOMES NEGATIVITY. [...]TO
LOSE AND TO MOURN REQUIRES GIVING UP THE
FANTASY THAT POSSESSION STAVES OFF
TRANSIENCE. SOMETIMES MOURNING THE LOSS
OF POSSESSION IS THE PRECONDITION OF LOVE
ITSELF, AN INITIAL UNDOING OF A PHANTASM
THAT MAKES WAY FOR SOMETHING LIVING.⁸

IN OTHER WORDS:

HARD LOVE

⁸ FROM “TO SENSE WHAT IS LIVING IN THE OTHER: HEGEL’S EARLY
LOVE,” *DOCUMENTA (13) 100 NOTES – 100 THOUGHTS*, No.66
(OSTFILDERN: HATJE CANTZ VERLAG, 2012), P.19