

bernhard günter: interview for HALANA, usa

**Q: the most striking, and rewarding, thing about your music is it's use of silence and quiet... please discuss their dominance in your music... what are the reasons/ motivations/precedents behind their use... how does this fit in with the philosophies/ goals/intents you have in regard to your composition...**

A: well, the question seems fairly simple, but the answer necessarily has to be a complex one, since there are quite a number of aspects involved... let me begin like this: in everyday life, my personal attitude to sound is kind of defensive; i try to ignore lots of things, like ambient noise (cars, trains, planes, etc.,...), commercial music ("commercial" is actually a very accurate description - most of what we hear as "music" is nothing but a commercial, something that advertises a product, itself as a product, a "lifestyle", & society & the state of things as they are... this is of course not music as a form of art, but rather musical craftsmanship serving various functions in society...), etc... my attitude is to shrink away from all this stuff agressing me, things i do not want to hear, but since we can't shut our ears, there's hardly a way to escape... sound becomes a negative experience for me... so in my own music, i try to OFFER something to the listener, instead of imposing it on him, something he can, or not, accept - generally, you do not have to listen to my music, if you do not want to, it's easy to ignore... but for me, & for many other people i have talked to, this invitation to listening is something that makes me lean forward, sharpen my attention & try to really enter the sound universe proposed to me.... it leads me to being calm & attentive without being strained & i find pleasure in the perception of sound, in listening itself... this also applies not only to volume, but to time, as well... the absolute overload of information input has shortened people's average attention span dramatically, & also has made them less sensible to input - so the basic tendency is to make everything fast, loud & flashy in order to make the projected audience at least notice it for some seconds - which of course leads to a vicious circle: the most spectacular thing today will be the most boring tomorrow, because it will have been used to death & also have helped to dull people's perception even more... there has been much written about the bombardement of useless, redundant information we suffer, so i do not have to go on about it. in my work, i try to create a time continuum that gives the listener a chance to hear sound appearing slowly, presenting itself, changing, intertwining with others, being repeated in different configurations, & finally disappear... there are no linear beats & chopping up organic time at 180bpm... the basic measure of time in my music is slow, relaxed breathing, which i manipulate by slowing it, or speeding it up in small, homeopathic doses, stretching & relaxing time like a rubberband... most people completely lose their sense of duration after a while & can never tell how long the piece lasted, when it's over...i have been told by listeners many times that they were amazed by the music being very abstract & very organic at the same time...

these aspects are obviously social ones as well as personal ones - my own reactions to a society that does not seem to provide us with a right to silence & quietness, & makes many people sick with the stress that results from sonic pollution... of course, there are esthetic & musical aspects, as well: i view music as a collection of sonic events in time, interconnected by musical form, so that sounds & their development can be exposed in their own "life", their "being-like-that" in a form that is apt for human perception. now small events in an austere environment to me are much more fascinating than lots of "spectacular" stuff going on at the same time - a small crackle after 30 seconds of silence, appearing out of nowhere, disappearing into nowhere again, will pick up my attention much more than the kind of colorful "sound catalogues" that many, especially academic, computer compositions display.

the first music that really made me understand the importance of economy of material in music, was morton feldman's: in his first string quartet, there's one first pizzicato after a long time, like half an hour or so, & after this pizzicato, it takes a long time, before another one will show up... this makes the pizzicato an unusually interesting event... in many contemporary music pieces you will find lots of these kinds of events in complex configurations of high density, etc., but none of these events ever struck me like feldman's lonely pizzicato. i started to learn about feldman's ideas & found that he wasn't at all interested in virtuoso, gestural writing, that he did not believe that a pitch at one octave & at one octave higher were "the same note" - he believed in listening to sound as it is, not reducing it to a quantitative concept like pitch based musical theory that has to view a "c" as a "c", regardless of whether it's on a piano or a flute, in this octave or another... all his music is about the quality of pitches, their actual sound. this led me to trying to find electronic sounds that were in no way imitative of musical instruments, & that had a density & presence of their own. i wanted the sound coming out of my speakers to be "the sound", not a simulation of sound or (worse) recorded sound; i gave up reverb &

other spacial imitation completely, tried to give sounds a rough/haptic quality that would enable them to stand for themselves, & would enable me to present them slowly, quietly, placing them inside the listeners own environment, rather than in an imaginary 3 story high cathedral... the result of these efforts became "un peu de neige salie", my first cd... the esthetic of my sound material is also influenced by painting, from the abstract expressionists (like rothko, de kooning, newman) to contemporary painters like antoni tapiés, the first in terms of atmosphere & presence of their paintings (like the quiet floating of a rothko), the second in his using sand & other matters in his painting, making them very "real", almost turning your eyes into fingers that touch the rough, granular surface... those painters are also an influence on how i view musical form - not as some sort of language or discourse, but as a kind structured time space... feldman once said that he was painting on time canvas with sound paint - i feel like that, too.

after "un peu de neige" was finished, i got interested in classic japanese esthetic & was very surprised that almost everything i had been instinctively looking for in my music/sound, was actually very well known as basics of these esthetics: austerity, dryness, coldness, the preference of patina over shining newness etc., all known under the concepts of wabi/sabi... also, it strengthened my idea that as there's no light without shadow, there's no sound without silence... i was delighted to find out about this , & it helped me to formulate my own way with more detail...

anybody who would like to look into japanese esthetic might want to try tanizaki junichirô's book "in praise of shadow", an easy way get some basic ideas about japanese esthetics... (tanizaki is his last name, & the title is taken from the french translation... in'ei raisan is the japanese one.).

**Q: speak a bit about the line "the music on this cd is intended to be listened to at very low volume!" found on "un peu de neige salie" - someone once described your music as sounding good really, really loud - how do you feel about this, if it is intended to be heard in the exact opposite situation... relating to this, if appropriate to your response, speak a bit about the loss of control you have in releasing recorded material as opposed to live performance, and vice versa... which do you prefer, if either...**

A: since my music exists only as a recording, i have to face the fact that it changes with every listener's equipment - each listener will have his or her own version of what i did - this is something i accept, since it is the only way to do what i do... to reassure myself about the consequences, i'm very thorough when i record & master my music, so that virtually anybody could hear what i have done, depending on the reproduction equipment they own - i make sure it is there... that's all i can do. the only reason i play live is that i generally try to bring my own sound system, the one i use for composing & recording, & play the sound for the audience under more or less the same conditions that i hear it when i work. my basic function at concerts is to set up the system according to the room so to make sure the sound is like it should be, spacial reproduction in that particular room works well, etc. - this only achieved by the placement of the system in the environment; i do not have any equalization, nor do i use more than stereo reproduction... two speakers, a poweramp, plus a cd player or dat machine are all i use, but setup may take up to 2 hours. then, my only function is pressing the play button (which seems to annoy some people, but my dancing is much inferior to michael jackson's...)... other than that, i freely choose the sequence of pieces played according tho audience's reaction & talk to them in between pieces, answer questions, etc.,... generally, it works quite well. at some concerts, something i call "magic moments" happens: people get totally absorbed in the music, total silence from everybody in the audience, & the collective attention absolutely enticing for everybody, including myself... it's a wonderful thing to happen, & one of the main reasons i do concerts at all, which for me generally is a lot of work (hard to get my system transported to the place of the concert, long setup, travelling, money for the show very often tight, etc.)... most of the time i really enjoy those concerts, though... it's great for me, working alone in my studio all the time, to finally speak to people who have been deeply moved by my work (some people of course hate it, too - i try to find out why, so to be able to learn from that reaction...). since, of course, i can play only for a small fraction of the people interested in my work, i have to rely on sound carriers like cds, knowing that each person will have a different impression & will make different use of it... in this sense, it's ok for me if somebody likes to turn my music up very loud - it's not my idea of it, but as i said before: my music is an offer to the listener - let him go ahead & do whatever he thinks appropriate with it (one good way is to use it to end a hip-hop party :-)... ). i have a strong tendency to perfectualism, which is why i record & master my music

myself, but i have had to learn to live with the way things are...

**Q: you left off your response to the first question speaking a bit about "un peu de neige salie"... please speak a bit more about that piece, especially as your first composition and introduction (?) into the world or composition, performance, collaborations, etc. that I assume you are very much entrenched in now... you spoke a bit about what were trying to achieve, touch on that a bit more, if appropriate... how was it received/how do feel about the reactions you have received... from here, I'm interested in a discussion of what happened to you, and your work, after the completion and release of 'un peu...' through to 'details agrandis,' leading into a discussion of that work, how the two compare, etc...**

A: "un peu de neige salie", first of all, is not a single piece in several parts, which many people seem to have believed - there are actually 5 individual pieces, representing my development as an electro-acoustic composer in chronological order...they have been composed exactly in the order they are on the cd... at the time i did these pieces, i had no idea of releasing them at all; they were the result of my trying to find a usable electronic style... the reason some people believe that the whole thing is one piece is probably that i aimed at incorporating the fact there was a soundcarrier, so i actually tried to "compose" the silences between the tracks, as well - it obviously made no sense to have pieces that include silences up to 30 seconds or so, & then have them separated by the usual 2 seconds silence... the first piece UNTITLED I/92 was the first piece i made in 1992 & it's the also the first & last piece i released that uses synthetic sounds only... it's made with a yamaha tx816, which includes 8 modules, each of which is the equivalent of a yamaha dx7 of the first generation; this piece uses 4 modules, with 2 different sounds i programmed, that's it... i drove the machine crazy using an arpeggiator on a prophet 2000 sampler (the sampler isn't heard), & automated all those mistakes & slips produced by the poor tx816 by means of a steinberg cubase sequencer program on an atari computer... by using all the quirks of the machine i made the whole thing sound quite different from the usual dx7 sound, & using the sequencer gave me the possibility to actually COMPOSE with those quirks... the second piece, UNTITLED II/92, only uses, like all the rest on "neige", an ensoniq eps16+ sampler, controlled by the cubase sequencer & recorded direct to DAT... this is my favourite piece on "neige"; it demonstrates the use of silence, time, sound & form in a way i still really like today... by the way, the ensoniq instrument is really the ONLY one used ; also, it is set to the highest resolution, at which it can only play back 7 notes at one time, so you never hear more than 7 different tones at once on the entire cd, plus the sampler has a memory of only 2mb... the whole thing taught me some about economy. i always loved the sound of that thing & still do! UNTITLED III/92 is based on a background/no background 2-part form - basically what you hear in the second part is the same you heard in the first, but the droning background is gone (now background in this case doesn't mean it's in the back, you see, it's more of an individual part that is continuous, while the other part is more event-like); basically means it's not REALLY the same, i modified it a bit according tho the changed perception basis of not having the continuous part going with it... UNTITLED IV/92 is based on a 5 second sample of somebody taking a deep breath during a voice performance... that is the only material used, modified to give all the sounds you hear in the piece, which gives the whole thing some kind of an "organic" (tongue, mouth, lungs, saliva, breath) sound world... the form of that piece is really funny, because it starts two times... after the first beginning, it kind of says: no, not that way! & then starts again (& that is what actually happened - after listening to the beginning, i thought: no, that's not it, & began again, but without kicking the first part out...)... & it takes about forever to end, making the IDEA of an end kind of superfluous & strange, before it softly disappears... UNTITLED I/93 is, you guessed it, the first piece i made in 1993... i made it in a really strange state of mind, completely lost in the work, & when it was finished, i did not have the slightest idea of what it "was"... i was wondering what the hell i had in mind doing it... only about two years later, when remastering "neige" for the current TABLE OF THE ELEMENTS re-release, it hit me & i finally understood ( don't even try - i'm not going to tell you... ). was a very strange experience & i was quite moved... well, those were the pieces of "neige" - but there was no release in sight, & i didn't even think of it... but i had met ralf wehowsky, who used to be part in P16.D4, a group that had shaped the idea of post-industrial music quite bit, & member of the artist group SELEKTION, running, among many other activities, the SELEKTION LABEL. ralf, who was experimenting with an akai s1000 sampler after P16.D4 had debanded (he started to work under the name of RLW at that time & continues to do so), & i got together a couple of times, finding that we had quite a couple of interests in common... finally, ralf asked what i would think of a release of my pieces on SELEKTION LABEL - i was surprised, but hurried to say: cool! so things were on their way - i made a master

DAT, sent it of & started worrying, asking myself whether what i did was really music, & whether anybody would listen to something that low in volume, with so many silences, and so forth... my uneasiness was increased by achim wollscheid, who took care of these things for SELEKTION, calling saying the master studio had called saying they couldn't do it, because the tape must be damaged, there was only noise & crackling, etc., on the tape... achim laughed a lot telling me the story how he had given the guy a lecture about how this stuff was art & it was ok like that... they made the master. then, the cd manufacturer called SELEKTION, saying the master was damaged, all they had was a bit of white noise & crackling... well, achim told them to go ahead anyway - i was thinking: now how's that for a good start.... the cds finally printed, achim, who had never heard the thing, called & asked me, whether it would be ok to add a slip of paper to the cd informing people that it was left blank intentionally! he had only a tiny stereo made of old car speakers in the office, said office situated near a very busy street with tons of car noises, etc., so he did not hear a thing - he thought the cd was actually empty! i seriously started thinking about hiding under the bed until everything was over... you can imagine how surprised i was when the cd came out & mail started to come from people who thought it was great & wonderful & whatnot... especially jim o'rouke decided it was his favourite of the year & started telling everybody about it (& he does know everybody...).. so i started receiving letters & cds by other composers who worked with electronic/electro-acoustic sounds - which surprised me even more, since i had not known that such a scene existed... coming from more from a contemporary instrumental music background (when it came to art music), i had never been in touch with such music... all i had tried was creating compositions without having to pay for an orchestra, if you see what i mean... that opened a whole new music world to me, which kind of influenced my second cd "details agrandis" - i mean, during the composition of the "neige" pieces, it was easy for me to be myself, not knowing the others... when i got to hear all these things, it was like an electro-magnetical field bending the path of an electron - i basically stayed on my path, but all this new stuff kind of bent it a little...

between "neige" & "details", there was a collaboration with ralf wehowsky, which was actually released after "details" under the title "un ocean de certitude" by dutch label V2 as a 3x3" box. for me, the collaboration was based on the concept that i had a "style", & i was interested to try that style on other peoples sound materials & combine with their ways of working - for me, style was the ensemble of basic methods/strategies/procedures... i think the collaboration worked out ok; ralf & i exchanged sounds & sequences by floppies & worked on our respective versions of things; we also got together & worked on some pieces. so the 3 mini cds contain one ralf wehowsky solo piece, one b.g. solo piece, & one collaborative piece, respectively. today, i'm not quite satisfied with my solo piece "deceptive likeness" anymore, but it deals with the question of using sounds imitative of acoustical instruments - basically, the answer was "no" (see conclusion of the piece - the acoustical sounds are still there but changed to a point to make them unrecognizable...).

i really liked one part of the piece & decided to compose an extended version of that part, under the working title "details agrandis" (which means "enlarged details")... that piece became piece #2 "stone circles" on my second cd, which received the title "details agrandis", because i realized this was true of all i was doing. the title "stone circles" comes from the fact that i was always thinking of the stone circles made by british land artist richard long when listening to that piece, so i dedicated it to him - it is the only piece i ever made for my personal enjoyment... piece#1 on the cd, "four grey paintings" demonstrates the way i was trying to liken my compositions to paintings; it is dedicated to jim o'rouke, who did a lot to spread the word about my music - he is a great guy & i'm very grateful to him. piece #3 "écriture automatique" was actually exactly that - it kind of developed on its own, & almost to the end of the composition, i did not understand what was going on...

i mentioned the notion of "style" above; the reason is that i learned from collaboration that this notion can be dangerous when it turns from an ensemble of methods/strategies/procedures to a kind of recipe that one tries to apply every time... i find that one should have a style without trying to create a style... it's important to feel free to follow the materials inner tendencies, it's potential & sonic reality, to use not only the methods, etc., that have worked well last time but always try to get a fresh perspective on how a piece may grow to it's final form. you see, my main idea about my music is that it should not be like language, it should not make constant references to things or concepts, & it should not be placed in a rigid formal frame that is based on quantizing parameters. it should have it's very own existence, it's very own sonic reality. i hate to overuse my favourite

metaphor, but i think music should be like a tree... it is standing there without wanting to tell you something, it has developed out of its own laws to a complex structure influenced by complex causality. it exists. yet, when one looks at it & gets involved in its manifold forms, the sound that it makes with the wind, etc., one may experience a lot of feelings, thoughts, etc., finally getting to an intuitive perception of existence, instead of its conceptual description through language. i think the piece i will send you for the halana cd is a good example of that kind of music - it is the first part of a piece called "un lieu pareil à un point effacé" (which means "a place like an erased point") which will be released this year by japanese label DIGITAL NARCIS, osaka... i'm still working on this cd, which i guess will have the same title... the piece moves very slowly, building a world of its own, between change, repetition, modified repetition... it's like organic growth, not meaning to signify anything in particular or have a definite aim to its path - you can ignore it, if you want, or witness its "life"... on the DIGITAL NARCIS cd it will be completed by its part 2, about the same length... this composition is already finished. a somewhat similar thing happens with my new 3"cd in french label METAMKINE's "cinema pour l'oreille" series, called "impossible grey", although this piece has more of a definite parcours starting at one end, finishing at the other, thus a little less like a landscape & more like a path... one has to free one self on one's "wanting to do this/wanting to do that" & go with the flow, use one's experience freely as a help from the past without turning it into a routine, a recipe... it is relatively easy to find out about this, but to make it one's practice can be very, very hard - i often experience bad periods of writer's blocks, because i cannot seem to let go & feel my way into a piece... it is through these bad experiences i have come to hate all limitations in making my music (especially deadlines)... although i have done some collaborations (with john hudak on "a fault in the nothing" on uk label ASH INTERNATIONAL, piece is called "the ant moves/the black & yellow carcass/a little closer", with john duncan on "home, unspeakable" my own label TRENTE OISEAUX, a collaboration that kept me feeling very free about what we were doing, & which i find, resulted in a work that is well worth listening to...), & remixes (of material by frans de waard, giancarlo toniutti, achim wollscheid, & asmus tietchens on "itinéraire" on SELEKTION, germany, recently alan lamb material on "night passage - demixed" by australian label DOROBO, & of MERZBOW material on "scumtron" by BLAST FIRST, uk.), but have decided that from now on i will probably not do it anymore, since collaborations are difficult for me, as i'm a very slow worker, & remixes & conceptual cds limit my musical material... it would not say "neve again", but not for a while, & if again, i'd be extremely picky...

**Q: speak about yr label, trente oiseaux... the ideas behind it/what you are trying to achieve &/or highlight in music through what you are releasing... talk about some of the artists you have released material by - how they fit into yr ideas - why you released something by them... how do you find running a label/music as a business...**

A: the idea i should do my own label actually came from my friend francisco lópez - at first i was rather surprised, but after giving it some thought, i found it was worth trying, & francisco's cd "warszawa restaurant" became TOC951, the first release on trente oiseaux... my basic idea for the label was to find artists who work in the electro-acoustic field, with a more or less clear tendency towards composition, but who would stay clear of both the typical academic kind of electronic music & the classical musique concrète & look for new ways... this concept is still the essential one for trente oiseaux, though i'm planning to release some acoustic work... actually, today i would in way insist on electro-acoustic sound sources, though they are definitely the labels mainstay... i obviously prefer rather silent music like francisco's subtle play with silence & sound, but still tried to keep the range of styles rather broad for trente oiseaux: following francisco's "warszawa restaurant", i released m. behrens work "advanced environmental control", TOC952, which consisted of his very nice piece "location recordings", a piece i heard live twice in its original 4-track version & liked very much. the piece makes use of location recordings, as the name indicates, tweezed & organized in to a very interesting composition, including a part that is like a catalogue of the locations.... marc then composed the additional name giving piece "advanced environmental control", using traffic lights designed to give sound signals to blind people, taking advantage of the fact that several different ones had been set up for experimental reasons close to his home... marc does not show a special interest in one dynamic range, but goes from very quite to quite loud... the next release "legions in the wall" TOC953 by daniel menche, on the contrary is by somebody who prefers a dynamic range indeed, which shall go by the name of "full blast". he's a most interesting noise artist who an improvisational approach, but who has the talent to improvise things that come very close to a composition, which was what i liked about, plus the very violent, rock-like attitude of his playing... the next release in the

first batch of 4 cds released at the very end of 1995 was ralf wehowsky's cd "revu et corrigé" TOC954 (under his project name RLW), containing re-mixed & reworked pieces that ralf had contributed to the 1986 double LP "nichts/nirgends/niemand/nie" by P16.D4. the idea was to get those pieces up to 90's standard. i did some of the equalization work of the original tape versions of those pieces, by the way... the first trente oiseaux in 1996 was john duncan/max springer's "the crackling", TOC961 a piece using sounds recorded at the SLAC particle accelerator (for more details see cover)... it's a very impressive, very electronic, strange work... next in 1996, there was roel meelkop's "9 (holes in the head)", TOC962. roel is a member of the very interesting dutch band THU20, & a live member of Kapotte Muziek. his cd contains an interesting collection of pieces that are not overly complex in appearance, but at a closer look, contain a lot of interesting details & atmospheres... both TOC961 & TOC962 are definitely composed works... TOC963, "belle confusion 966", by francisco lópez again, is a work composed especially for the "trente oiseaux alpine tour", as we called it, a series of shows featuring, francisco lópez, m. behrens, john duncan, & myself did in austria & switzerland. the cd contains the original piece, very quiet, & a 20+ min long excerpt of francisco's live mix in zürich. i love that cd! TOC964, finally, last one to be released in 1996, is my collaboration with john duncan "home, unspeakable" based on a short quotation from samuel beckett... it is, i think a unique mixture of both of our styles & the best sold trente oiseaux cd, so far... it is really quite hard to describe, so maybe every one on the planet should get one :-). .... well, now for the latest release so far, TOC 971, "from the moon to the fish" by brad taylor, a young american artist based in athens, georgia, USA. his style is very minimal on that cd, though not always very quiet... it is abstract, though sometimes ironic in it's discourse... some people seem to have difficulties with this approach, feeling a lack of emotional content & not reading the path the music takes with ease... personally, i like the cd very much, & it is the distance & coolness it creates, (with the little humorous twists) that turn me on... i would advice anyone to give it a try & listen very closely & with an awake mind.

by the way, i'm always looking for interesting artists & works for the label (like, for instance, TOC971 is brad taylor's first work ever released, as was m. behrens TOC952 his first cd in this musical style to be released). so if you are an artist reading this, who thinks he might have an interesting work to offer in the range of style trente oiseaux covers, feel free to send something for evaluation.

what is it like to be a composer & run a label at the same time? well, it would make a nice reward for anybody who has killed his mom & dad, but for the moment, i still enjoy it (most of the time). basically, i found that most distributors, etc., i deal with are honest, engaged people (although there were some exceptions, which hurts...) & i enjoy communicating with them... it's most of the time a non-profit thing, which wasn't what i planned, but what i turned out to be :-). ... but seriously, what i tried to do was to create a label that would have high standards of quality, & that the listener would be able to rely on, thinking: "if it's on trente oiseaux, then i can't be that bad", & i'm proud that trente oiseaux has received praise from all over the world as one of the most interesting & high quality labels. when i saw that brad's cd (remember, nobody had ever heard the guy) had sold 2/3 of the first run, before i even got the cds, i thought, well, people seem to trust us. i am very proud of that & would like to thank everybody who believes in our label.

now that the interview is reaching the end, i would like to give the readers a bit of afterthought, things that the situation of questions & answers has made me think about... while chris of HALANA & i were working on the final form of the interview, he asked me whether he might shorten or cut a couple of remarks of technical nature from one of my answers, because he thought that technical information might be above some of the readers head, who might turn away from their lecture because of that... i understood his point of view & it reminded me of some info on HALANA i read & which stated that HALANA was more interested in the "spiritual" side of music, a point of view i definitely sympathize with. Nevertheless, the whole idea raised a big BUT in my mind, so that i decided to clarify my point of view concerning artists & technology. you, see, in many cases, even with artists themselves, the question of technology turns out to be a very ideological subject: some proudly declare that they hate computers & would never touch them, using the oldest stuff still working they can find, others are slaves to their equipment & try to define what the future of sound & technology may be... ideologic thinking leads to downright aberrations very once in a while, like one time i was insulted by some guy at a show, who said people like me with all those machines were the reason for nuclear power plants to be built in order to produce all the juice we freaks need - i don't quite feel like discussing that argument in detail, but you see what i mean... i will try to give an answer to the problem from the heart of the matter & leave ideology

aside. it seems clear to me that for centuries musicians have created music with & for machines, generally called "instruments" - nowadays, of course, many of these instruments/machines are digital electronic equipment. there is, in our post-modern age, a lot of instruments to choose from, so if somebody does dislike samplers, he can always find a drum or a flute or whatever, & he's perfectly right in doing so, if it is the thing he needs. others, like me, have chosen electronic instruments to be their tools. so, to this point, it's the artists free choice to select whatever he thinks adequate to what he wants to create & he should be careful to choose something with his heart, not with what anybody told him... because from that point on, he will have no choice but to really study the instrument(s), whether he be a player or composer (or both) & employ their capabilities to the maximum. morton feldman, whom we have mentioned before, had this advice for his composition students: "know your instrument" - i perfectly agree. i find that a technical inspiration (referring to this or that strategy in the use of instruments, especially electronic ones, including computers & software) is as valuable as having a great musical idea. it is of course important not to let the master be reduced to a slave, & run after latest technologies, buried in manuals, trying to figure out equipment, instead of making music... of course, we are never the perfect masters of our machines; like in music itself, i find it important not to dream of total control, but to create things in a kind of dialogue with the given material. on the other hand, i believe that amateurism is no solution for creating music in the sense i have discussed it above... the secret of music is to always try & "do the right thing" regardless of schools, ideologies, of what people say, & of "what's hip" - "all i ask a composer to do is to rinse his ears before he sits down to compose" (right, feldman again).

now, one last topic, before i stop stealing your time: this is the end of the interview - does it express what i have to say? does it contain precise meanings & depth concerning my work, & art in general? same problem every time i have to write (or talk, which is what i prefer...) about these things... well, all i said is true, as far as i can see, but, due to the situation, one has to simplify, keep it at reasonable length & so forth - now, anybody who simplifies is lying a little bit... i have been actively involved in music for 28 years now, living for it, studying it, trying to find my way into esthetics as a part of philosophy & philosophy as a part of art, to understand art as a part of life... hard to put one's life & passion into words on a couple of pages in a foreign language... i hope that my effort will still give you some insight & hope you've been reading this with interest. my best to you all. last, but not least, many thanks to chris of HALANA for having the patience to do this interview with me.