

## “Klangschaften”

Solo Exhibition Martin Daske

1/23-3/13/2010

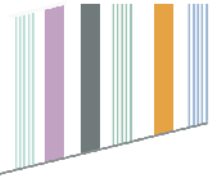
### Multidimensional play - Martin Daske's sound-microcosmos

Martin Daske's "Folianten" are three dimensional scores; toys for musicians. Interpreters may engage with these revolving and reversible sculptures for months in order to unlock their form of notation and to transform the different readings into sound. Interpreters are not only performing with them. Since the 1980's the development of "Folianten" has been based on a hard-to-tame play-instinct, with the composer taking great pleasure in an experimentation where mind games, the notion of innovation, and craft are all melting into each other. Forms from raw material, constructions from found objects, the shaping of an idea – these are the building blocks of complex microcosmos, which are set as sculptures in the "Folianten". Their handling combines freedom and discipline, responsibility for oneself and compliance with rules. To „improvise“ with or on the "Folianten" is not an exact expression, as they are scores with clear guidelines (although the specification of such guidelines, the definition of sound dimensions or parameters and the clarification with regards to their implementation need the creative input of interpreters).

With "Folianten" Martin Daske has achieved an innovation in scoring as well as an advancement in the art of graphic notation, which has great resonance internationally. Many musicians work with Daske's art objects, which are often first “assigned“ to a dedicee. "Folianten" are in fact generally constructed for a specific instrument or ensemble. Christian Wolff, Martin Daske's teacher, wrote in 1988: „Present and independent as these works may be as visual and sculptural objects, their imagery includes much that is musical, incorporating parts of musical instruments, verbally identified by the names of specific instruments and including sometimes elements of actual musical notation. They are evocative and elegant representations of musical material. And they are also intended for musical use, that is to produce music.“ By the material of a "Folianten," one can rarely deduce its actual sonic output, even if musical instruments are used as building blocks of the work. If the treatment of electronic junk in the "Foliant" for Punk-Rock band seems to establish a direct relation to its sonic environment, in other cases the relationship is rather ambiguous. "Foliant 29" for double bass, currently being shown in the exhibition and interpreted by Matthias Bauer, includes delicate fragments of a violin that offer a visual contrast during play. But who is to say that double bassists can not play filigree structures? What happens when the musician amplifies and expands the assembled fragments? Under a microscope little puddles grow into giant landscapes – an image that most certainly belongs to Martin Daske's imagination: he has captured such impressions in photographs, which in future works will continue the combination of sound and landscapes as "soundscapes" (*Klangschaften*).

A new, only recently developed variation of the "Folianten" is the "Notensetzen," (Note cases) to be arranged and played by the interpreters themselves: an approximate return of the "Folianten" into two dimensionality. In a rectangle filled with sand one is able to place and combine fragments and figurations that can be read as a score. Here too the field is open for materials, forms and complexities to be interpreted musically, without excluding strong contrasts and similarities as well.

The "Folianten", as well as the images and figurations of the "Notensetzen", are forms of notation that, by way of their implementation into music, offer sonic openings on an imaginary time line. To present acoustic microcosmos, to pick up on their lively impulses, to transform them, to extricate or blend out specific elements, to expose and reconstitute the layers: these are not only possible rules of the game for the “Folianten,” but also strategies that are being used by the composer in other contexts. Sound compositions by Martin Daske, in film music or radio art, often present specific scenes out of everyday life – departure points for a three-dimensional sound imagery that translate to spatial impressions of moments. They are impressions in stages, much like those occurring during a journey.



Martin Daske has collected such significant moments for almost 10 years on his river barge, a large, functioning carrier boat (with anchorage in Paris) which incorporated a living-space and studio (tribord studio). The passages by boat have been captured in the sound-installation "backboard ein Kolibri" (1996), associated to a fictitious travel diary, which has been partially presented in concerts for a range of instrument ensembles and electronics. The movement on and with the boat plays a central role: „where the motor drones, here is the back. always. there is no rearview mirror. and in front? front is straight north, there are bridges, bridges and watergates. and tunnels. and watergates. watergates and bridges. and somewhere over there, that's where we want to go.“ The installation also portrays the boat itself on a smaller scale.

Acoustic microcosmos and composed sonic scenes transform under Martin Daske into spatial audio plays (as Manfred Mixner put it in a commentary on the radio-play "Der Stein" from 1991). Listeners enter an atmospheric, sensual audio-space where stories and memories of associations to people, objects, landscapes, animals, sunk objects and movements with or without destination abound. There concrete sounds are often used in an interplay with vague echoes, which result from the sound processing. Noises, voices and musical quotes constitute the sound material, which is tied in a net with knots and loose ends.

Martin Daskes' complex play series "mémoires eines echonebels," established as a radio art project back in summer of 2008, seems like a summary of all the mentioned elements. The point of departure for the work are hundreds of drawings and aquarelles, thought as parts of a score. Slightly smaller than A5 paper (19,5 x 14,8 cm), they are developed in abstract forms with a variety of materials such as ink, pencil, red wine, coffee and water-colors. The pages are treated individually and converted into sound through computer analysis and processing. The generated sounds are 3 to 37 seconds in length. Again, those results may change. Through the single sounds, different parts of a score, of a page, or of a drawing from the series are being interpreted and performed. Added to these sounds are excerpts from the archive of field recordings by the composer himself. Processings of processings develop – echo-fog, layers from multiple translations, infra-medial constellations. It is not by accident that the original shapes and formations of the drawings present similarities with segments of the "Folianten". Indeed, the conversion of the series "mémoires eines echonebels" into a mobile out of 170 different drawings for the exhibition seems like an appropriate choice. The visitor thereby becomes a player who can move through an amplified "meta-folianten" suspended in the exhibition space. In addition, four loudspeakers give voice to the computer generated and site-specifically composed sound-installation.

The versatility of Martin Daske's work is also apparent in his collaborations with writers, language and voice artists. For example, with singer Claudia Herr he explored music under water ("AquAria", 2008), and with dancer and choreographer Carol Vinni the interplay of movement and sound. ("Je voudrais être légère", Cie Lalage, Marseille 2008/2009). At present he has undertaken a collaboration with the video artist Erika Matsunami.

In Martin Daskes' oeuvre is a multidimensional play at work, one that corresponds to his multiple roles and functions as a composer, author, director and producer within his own studio. If in his electroacoustic pieces he recounts real and fictitious stories, internal monologues and multi-voiced sounds, the sonic environments that emanate from his instrumental and vocal compositions are not only to be understood as abstract forms in time, but also allow for expansion into other realms of experience.