

FIDELITO/LA REVOLUCIÓN Y LAS MUJERES

Titles:

Peter Ablinger

Quadraturen III („Wirklichkeit“)
Squarings III („Reality“)
studies for player piano

study #3: „Fidelito/La Revolución y las Mujeres“

3 parts
total time: 55'25"

special thanks to Thomas Musil, who wrote the software for all of the Quadraturen pieces, and to Winfried Ritsch, constructor of the computer-controlled piano

(general text about the Quadraturen)

Quadraturen (Squarings) is the name I have given to a method that seeks to present in visual terms any type of recorded sound. It may be compared to the phenomenon of grain encountered in photographs. Frequency (f) and time (t) are used as co-ordinates on a screen comprised by a number of small noise fields, whose format may be, for example, 1 second (time) multiplied by 1 second (interval).

The first thoughts on how to carry out the technical realization arose after encountering the whole-tone filter of the Experimental Studio in Freiburg. This piece of equipment has a „freeze function“ that may be understood as a kind of spectral screen (visually and analytically). An invitation by IEM Graz led to a number of happy encounters with the institute's personnel, including Robert Höldrich, Winifried Ritsch and Thomas Musil. At last, I had the opportunity to carry out my ideas. First, a semitone filter was constructed, one that allowed intervallic sizes to be varied at will. Then, the concept of temporal screening – in the sense of a series of more or less rapid static analyses – was developed for the entire sound spectrum. At the beginning of 1997 the first two-dimensional screening in real

time became possible. During this time a name for our project was found, and by the end of that year the undertaking had broadened considerably.

The whole cycle of „Quadraturen“ consists of:

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|-----------------|--|
| Quadraturen I | „City portrait Graz“ (2 versions)
„Language is“ - Preliminary studies in recorded form |
| Quadraturen II | „20th century speakers“ - Installation for 6 loudspeakers on tall platforms based on screened speeches by Hitler, Lenin, Kennedy, Fidel Castro, Gandhi, and Martin Luther King |
| Quadraturen III | „Reality“ - studies for player piano |
| Quadraturen IV | „Self portrait with Berlin“ - for ensemble and CD |
| Quadraturen V | „Music“ - for orchestra |

(special text for „Fidelito“)

Quadraturen III („Wirklichkeit“)
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Quadraturen III is, in opposition to the otherwise fixed and finished Quadraturen I, II, IV and V, an open work - or, itself a series within the series. Therefore, Quadraturen III consists of an open number of installation- and concert-pieces for computer-controlled piano, all of them concerned with the reproduction of concrete sounds, street noise, speech, *-reality-*, via the sound-repertoire of the piano.

„Fidelito/La Revolución y las Mujeres“ („*Fidelito/the Revolution and the Women*“), the third of its pieces, uses as its material three of eight sides of four records that comprise a single speech given by Fidel Castro during a congress of the „revolutionary women of Cuba“ in 1974. All of the sounds of the piece result from the direct transfer of the sounds of the record - the needle, the scratches - *and* its content - the voice of Fidel Castro, the applause and jubilation of the mostly female audience - into the sound world of the piano. This transfer might be described as the manipulation of the grid, or, in photographic terms, as the enlargement or diminution of the grain, and the variation of contrast between fore- and

background. A larger grain stands for a slower piano and a piano – as it then plays within a more human range of potentialities – that at least reminds one of a piano. A smaller grain stands for a faster piano, or for an increase in tempo such that one can no longer distinguish single attacks as tempo and the sounds therefore become continuous. In such sections it becomes audible that we are listening to a voice and – with some practice and acclimation – we can sometimes even understand a few words of Castro's Spanish.

And yet listening to a voice seems incompatible with listening to a piano. Comparable to those 3D-pictures where one first sees a mass of abstract ornaments and then – with practice squinting – discovers a three-dimensional object. But one can never have both at once: the ornament or the object, the piano or the voice.

(A few examples of words that I at least think I understand:

I/0:30 „queridas invidadas, (I/0:37) queridas compañeros“

I/0:56 „...delegación (I/0:59) de las mujeres de todo el mundo“

I/2:29 „Valentina Tereshkova, (I/2:34) Angela Davis“

I/2:44 „la presencia numerosa (I/2:52) de las mujeres de las pueblos hermanos de América Latina, (I/3:02) la presencia (I/3:09) de las mujeres árabes“

etc.)

(P.A.;
english version
edited by Bill Dietz)