

Bogusław Schaeffer - Symphony - Electronic Music (1969/2018)

Written by bluesever

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Bogusław Schaeffer - Symphony - Electronic Music 1 1st Movement 5:09 2 2nd Movement 4:40 3 3rd Movement 2:20 4 4th Movement 4:40 + 5 Włodzimierz Kotoński - Study For One Cymbal Stroke Performers: (1) - Bohdan Mazurek (2) - Thomas Lehn (3) - Barbara Okan-Makowska (4) - Wolfram (5) - Male Instruments

The name Boguslaw Schaeffer was one I carried around for a long time as a student in the form of an enormous volume entitled 'Introduction to Composition'. Filled almost entirely with examples from avant-garde scores, this weighty tome seemed to typify the scale of investment Eastern Europe was prepared to give to contemporary music in the 1960s and 1970s. As artists we learned huge amounts from musical Poland those days, and with this release of some of Schaeffer's seminal electronic music we can re-visit those times and make up our own minds as to the lasting value of this kind of work.

I would by no means be surprised if the majority of people, perhaps even the majority of musicians would regard the work on that CD to be 'squeaky gate' music. This is the kind of experimental, abstract and a-tonal stuff which still gives listeners the heebie-jeebies even now, 50 years after it was made. As a point of reference, the multi-movement Electronic Symphony is in some ways comparable with Stockhausen's *Kontakte* in its purely electronic form. The use of space to move sounds around, the variety of nuance and articulation, sonority and timbre are all highly detailed and distinctive. These qualities added to the interactive way in which the work is performed made this one of Schaeffer's most important works, and it is still a significant monument today – not just as a figurehead for what was to come later on, but as a powerful piece of music in its own right. ---Dominy Clements, musicweb-international.com

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In his book Electronic Music (Cracow, 2002), Włodzimierz Kotoński describes the composition procedure: "Unlike the vast majority of musique concrète that has been created to date, here the material has been reworked in a very strict manner, modelled on serial electronic compositions. The cymbal sound was filtered into five bandwidths and transposed to eleven pitches according to a preconceived scale. A special eleven-degree duration scale (based on the ratio of tone duration to the following rest within the unit of time assigned to the given sound) with six types of articulation, as well as a parallel eleven-degree dynamic scale with six ADSR envelopes (3 rising and 3 falling) were formed. The whole was composed according to the principles of total serialism." Włodzimierz Kotoński's composition was presented at the Warsaw Autumn Festival in 1960, and later at new music concerts and festivals in numerous countries.

---warszawska-jesien.art.pl

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