

Javier Torres Maldonado

Encounters and Memories

Maturation of multidisciplinary projects, confirming an interest in the dialogue between the arts



Jean-Luc Hervé

The Ensemble Court-Circuit will take on tour *En dehors* for clarinet, violin, cello and piano, on February 28 to the Salle d'Art Lyrique of the Conservatoire in Boulogne and on March 10 to the Conservatoire of Cergy-Pontoise. The Ensemble Recherche will also play *Dans l'ombre des anges* for flute, clarinet, cello and percussion on March 26 at the Salzburg Biennale. Finally, *Au loin* for eight cellos will be played on June 5 in Vandoeuvre, by the Ensemble Nomos.

A series of first performances for Javier Torres Maldonado between Winter and Spring. On **February 23** in Montréal, during the Festival Montréal Nouvelles Musiques and coinciding with a masterclass held by the composer at the McGill University, the first performance in Canada of *Figuralmusik II/A* for ensemble and electronics will be given by Walter Boudreau conducting the Ensemble of the SMCQ. On **March 10 to 12** the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Forum in San Francisco will give the first performance of *Atlacualo, the Ceasing of Water*, acousmatic music for a multidisciplinary work, commissioned by the Navarrete x Kajiyama Dance Company of San Francisco, who will give its premiere. The work was prepared at the studios of GRAME (Centre National de Création Musicale in Lyon), with the collaboration of the acoustic engineer Max Bruckert, during the composer's artistic residence in September 2010 for the purposes of the elaboration of the electro-acoustic part. The work is in line with Maldonado's constant interest in collaborating with artists from other disciplines. The composer explains: «*Atlacualo, the Ceasing of Water* draws from the mythology and iconography of ancient Mexico to tackle urgent questions regarding the right to water and its shortage. Inspired by the poetry and the didactic power of pre-Colombian myths, it develops a compelling discourse about the exploitation of natural resources, in a production that combines contemporary dance, performance art, acousmatic music, installations of visual art and video. *Atlacualo* is the result of the artistic encounter between different characters: two Mexican artists working in San Francisco, José Navarrete and Violeta Luna, the composer Javier Torres Maldonado, the video/film artist Ricardo Rivera and the visual artist Lauren Elder. The work on the acousmatic part was mostly made using sounds captured from the actual noises produced by the actors on stage: salt that falls on the floor, the friction of clothes, of the hands, the body, sounds produced with objects used in the dramatic part or the dance. The overall picture conceived by the composer is completed, on the basis of the dramatic aspects of some scenes, by sound landscapes recorded in various cities of the world that combine, overlap and transform giving rise to a wide variety of environments that virtually enlarge or restrict the space where the dramatic events take place or those occupied by the dance». Two performances mark the baptism of *Iridiscente* for piano, percussion, interactive electro-acoustic system and video. On **April 23** in Grenoble it will be possible to hear the first performance of the version without video, as the prelude to the concert by the Ensemble Orchestral Contemporain; on **May 12** at the Opéra de Lyon, during the "Année du Mexique en France", the first performance of the complete version will be given, with Candida Felici on piano and Yi-Ping Yang on percussion, and Max Bruckert, from GRAME, as sound engineer. The video was made by Danio Catanuto. For the preparation of the electro-acoustic part, commissioned by the GRAME and the Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte in Mexico, the composer undertook an artistic residence at the studios of GRAME from **January 24** till **28**. The concert will be preceded by a talk held by the composer in the foyer of the Lyon opera. Torres Maldonado tells us: «The emotional perspective generated by memories is probably one of the factors that, to some extent, bring about our present. Each of our perceptions provokes sensations which we react to in different ways, and some of them are eventually transformed into images or concepts that remain distant and abstract with respect to the original experiences that generated them. Among my childhood memories there are some that are inevitably linked to music. When I was 10-12 my parents took me on several trips into the jungles of Quintana Roo, in the south of the Yucatan Peninsula, the region where I was born. On the way back I always tried to travel in the back part of the car, to watch the sunset, with the sky

enflamed with very bright and brilliant colours. The explosion of those images stirred my imagination to the point that I associated those celestial landscapes with hypothetical musical architectures deriving from chromatic scales. These mental projections gave rise, in my imagination, to actual refractions that consisted of a constant movement of "threads of sound", as if they were real luminous and musical skies projected simultaneously in my mind. It took me many years to consider these ideas more than just a pleasant memory, innocent and typical of childhood, resulting from a multidimensional way, I might say, of conceiving music. In reality, this multidimensionality is not only reflected in the work but also in the time of its realization, it regards dialogues and the interactions between composer and the performers, between man and machine (composer and technological means), at the level of writing and the conception of the complementary spaces between the acoustic instruments, the electro-acoustic system and the video, between composer and visual artist, between composer and musical assistant (Max Bruckert from GRAME, Lyon), as well as the essential, virtual, fantastic interaction, set in a further imaginary space: the dialogue with my childhood memories». On **May 20**, at the Théâtre Romain Rolland de Ville-Juif in Paris, during the Festival Extension de La Muse en Circuit (Centre National de Création Musicale) and the "Année du Mexique en France", the world premiere will be given of *Un possible día*, a multimedia work, almost a radio drama, for voice, ensemble, interactive electro-acoustic system and video, commissioned by the Ensemble 2e2m, the Centre National de Création Musicale La Muse en Circuit and the Sistema Nacional de Creadores de Arte in Mexico, with the support of FONCA (Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes). The text of the radio drama is by Ana Candida de Carvalho Carneiro, the lyrical texts by José Manuel Recillas, the graphic art and video by Magali Lara. It will be performed by the Ensemble 2e2m and La Muse en Circuit (computer technology), directed by Pierre Roullier, with the soloists Maja Pavlovská, soprano, and David Jisse, actor. Torres Maldonado will take two artistic residences, in **December 2010** and **April 2011**, in the studios of La Muse en Circuit to produce the electro-acoustic part. The work will be recorded in its entirety for a Cd on the ALAMUSE label co-produced by the Ensemble 2e2m, the Muse en Circuit and the Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes in Mexico. The composer speaks of the new work: «*Un possible día (Aquél océano profundo)* stems from my interest in dialoguing, interacting and building complex projects with artists from other disciplines. Much of its realization was possible thanks to the interest in my music shown by Pierre Roullier, the director of Ensemble 2e2m. The idea of working on a new work with characteristics belonging more to the radio drama than to the melologue had already been in my mind for some time, but the difficulty was to find a suitable subject and a text. The solution in the end was to ask the dramatist Ana Candida Carvalho and the poet José Manuel Recillas to create the texts especially for the purpose. The dramatic subject focuses on an ordinary day in the life of a common woman (the protagonist), whose loneliness plunges her into various sound landscapes. On the stage of an imaginary theatre we see (almost like a "film", due to the speed with which the various scenes often follow each other, but without explicit images, despite the presence of the video in the live show) the sounds and images from that day like any other, until an encounter, that happens in the woman's imagination, radically changes the apparent predictability of the events». Another first performance will be given in France, that of *Espira III* for violin and accordion, on **May 27** at the Théâtre de Cornouaille, Scène Nationale de Quimper, with the soloists Marianne Piketty and Pascal Contet. This is how Torres Maldonado introduces the work, commissioned by the Association AIE (Accordéon