## Tape Concerts: The Institute of Sonology, Utrecht

The Institute of Sonology grew out of the Studio for Electronic Music which opened at Utrecht University in 1961. The first equipment came from the Philips Physics Laboratory, where composers such as Badings, Raaijmakers, Dissevelt, De Leeuw and Varèse had worked, and was accompanied by two former Philips employees, the engineer R. Vermeulen and Dick Raaijmakers. An artistic program was outlined and technicians were engaged. Besides the studio facilities available to composers, discussions got under way on tuition and research. Opinions differed widely: Raaijmakers left for The Hague and Vermeulen retired, but not before designating Henk Badings as his successor. Under Badings' direction (1962—64), Utrecht musicology students were provided with a course of practical training in the electronic music studio. Since Badings had also accepted a professorship at the Stuttgart Musikhochschule however, and his obligations elsewhere prevented him from fulfilling all his university commitments, and a new dual directorship, Gottfried Michael Koenig (artistic director) and Frank de Vries (administrative director), set up a training course in acoustic design. Tuition was extended to include classes in composition and analysis, production technique, exercises in sound production, electro-acoustics and mathematics. Meanwhile (1967) the studio had been given a new name, the Institute of Sonology, in view of the much wider field covered by its activities. The series of concerts of electronic music organized annually in Utrecht and Amsterdam were expanded by instrumental and vocal items, and a start was made with an audio-visual series, "Music and Image". There was a steady increase in the number of students. The student complement, like that of visiting composers, has always been international. The attraction for the numerous American and other students seems to be the combination of a broadly-based curriculum and facilities for research and artistic activities as developed by composers such as Schat, Shinohara, Koenig, Boehmer, Halffter, Kagel, Kunst, Weiland, Kelemen, Stibilj, Ponse, Kaegi, Eisma, De Marez Oyens, Giltay, Ten Holt, Vink and many more. The arrival in 1971 at the Institute of its first computer, a PDP-15, heralded a new phase of development. A number of theoretical problems required digital processing equipment, while the computer proved to be equally indispensable for sound production. More attention was devoted to sonological research, a step taken not at the expense of the music, but of the Institute as an open workshop. It is inevitable that a university institute's principal concern should be a pre-established research program and that it should provide the necessary facilities for this while at the same time allowing scope for composition and other artistic projects. The unavoidable consequence is a selection process with regard to the incoming applications for research and composition projects. Besides the research and composition activities involving the computer which are referred to in Tempelaars' article, tape compositions were produced last year by Roland Kayn, Peter Cusack, Frank Sacci, Paul Berg, Jaap Vink, Ivan Patatich, Rick Banks, Steve Holtzman and Frits Weiland who, as a film-maker, also instituted audio-visual experimentation. Others active in this field are Alain Schumacker, Klas Torstensson, Theo Coolsma, Makoto Shinohara, Peter Struycken, Reinhard Necas, Trevor Batten, Floris Teunissen van Manen and Hans Ponse. The Institute is presided over by an executive board.

F. W.

**LARUS GRIMSSON**

"VETRAROMANTIK"

"Vetraromantik" (Winter Romantic) in three parts:
— Hjarnfjuk

— Skammdegisorar
— Himingglaetur

The piece is based on the memory of staring at the sky, while lying in the snow at dark.

Therefore the first part reflects the cold, symbolized by the snow.

The second part reflects the darkness and deals with a personal visualizing of images encircling things which are not really there.

The third part reflects the infinite sky with his huge transformations which are visible to us like the aurora borealis, the clouds and the light in general.

**ROBERT NASVELD**

"NEW WORK" (première) (1981—1984) ca. 13'

**JAAP M.VINK**

"TIDE II" (version 1984) duration 18'

TIDE is, just as my previous compositions, based on my preference for recursive processes. This sounds complicated but is actually very simple. It just means that a sound and its derivatives can be, if desired, recorded on top of each other in one action so that the sound structure becomes more or less closed. This depends on the external intervention of the composer. The derived sounds provide the coloring. This coloration can happen quickly or slowly. For TIDE I chose the latter because the tide is also a relatively slow process which requires about 6.5 hours for completion. In order not to try the listener's patience too much, I shortened TIDE to about 45 minutes.

TIDE II is the last part of TIDE and can be considered an independent composition.

My preference for recursive processes comes from the fact that the material is directly accessible to the composer who can therefore stimulate the expressivity of the sound. Another advantage which is immediately apparent when listening is that the sound gains acoustically and leaves the terrain of its origin, the electronic sound.

**ROLAND KAYN**

"READY-MADE, DÉCOLLAGE"

The two pieces of "READY-MADE" came to life in summer 1982 in the studios No. 2 and 3 of the Institut voor Sonologie, when we made the preparations for a new, cyclically designed project. They may be considered a "pre-echo" of a composition still to be realized, made when the project in view was still far from assuming a concrete form. By way of contrast "Décollage" grew out from what was practically a re-treatment of the project mentioned.

The advance of the work in the studio showed that the composer during the dialogue with the machine–or rather with the complex network of different systems-is likely to correct his aesthetical point of view continuously in order to reach solutions that appear valid to him. Simulation-models, on the basis of retroactive circuits, open a much wider access to new

aesthetical categories than for instance directed modes of production. With the liberation of the subconscious, the retrieval of the unknown–with the aid of technique–we inevitably ran into a game of communication between subject and object, leading directly to the final state, the product.

A process–controlled with a scheme not oriented towards a defined goal, as we used in this case–showed itself unrepeatable in time and shape. The singular event of creating a non-predictable phenomenon in an electro-acoustical way presented itself to me as the most absorbing adventure of contemporary composing. The "Ready-Made" pieces did not have any links with pictorial arts–like Marcel Duchamp's for instance–which came to their reality in art through the edging away of the object's original functions. On the contrary, more or less controlled search-processes in the electro-acoustical field of music with a high degree of improbability stood in the foreground. "Décollage" emerged from the sound-residue of my composition "Scanning" (Utrecht 1982-83). The finale is a quotation from the "Deutschlandlied" in Karl-Heinz Stockhausen's version (cf. K.-H. Stockhausen, "Hymnen", Studio für Elektronische Musik, Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Cologne), but with the interpolation of the "Solidaritätslied" composed by Hanns Eisler. The "Ready-Mades" are dedicated to my friend Jaap Vink, who has for long years been furthering and accompanying my work in the studios of the Instituut voor Sonologie of the Rijksuniversiteit in Utrecht. Finally I found it necessary to pay a posthumous reverence with a dedication to Johannes Theodor Baargeld, a German artist of European character, who belonged to the circle of artists around Max Ernst in the twenties.

**TOM WILLEMS**

"LOIN D'ICI"

"Loin d'ici" is a try-out tape for a dance-theatre piece choreographed by William Forsythe which will be performed in the Opera at Frankfurt (Germany), next season. All the sounds are made from a 10-second-long tone of the oboe. The total piece will last between 2 and 2 1/2 hours.