

JEAN-CLAUDE ELOY - AHATA-ANAHATA (3CD by Hors Territories)

JEAN-CLAUDE ELOY - YO-IN (4CD by Hors Territories)

Today I spend a whole day with Jean-Claude Eloy. Not literally of course, but I listened to these 7 CDs with two works, and read all the material that came along with it. In the case of 'Ahata-Anahata' this is a CD sized book, of 80 pages but with mostly images but in the case of 'Yo-In' this is like a A5/B5 sized book of 150 pages. Now this is not my first encounter with the long works of Eloy, before I reviewed 'Shanti' (2CDs) and 'Gaku-No-Michi' (4CDs) - see Vital Weekly 752. This former student of Darius Milhaud likes to compose lengthy works, although primarily electronic, its not exclusively electronics and these works proof that. 'Anahata' is a work in three parts, the first spanning two discs and the second and third are on the third disc. The work started when Eloy composed a work for a Gagaku orchestra, made up of Japanese traditional court music and Buddhist singers (the first composer to do so other than traditional texts) and then went on to compose this new work , which incorporates electronics, traditional instruments, such as the Sho, O-Sho, Shomyo, Hichiriki and the ryuteki and Japanese voices. The title is from the sanskrit and refers to 'the idea of a fundamental frequency of the universe, an unstruck, unheard sound, a vibration cosmic by nature, translated as 'primordial vibration'' and is a work of great contemplation, certainly the almost 100 minutes of the first part. Here we have large parts of vocal singing, bells sounds and throughout its seems not a lot of electronic music, although in some parts there is some metallic rumble. An excellent part. In part two things start to get a bit louder, the flutes here play an important and electronica is more 'awake', which then culminates in the third part which is the most electronic one, blending vast electronic drones with the sound of the Sho, O-Sho and Alto-Sheng. The cerebral nature of the two other parts seems to be broken here, but the organ like sounds perhaps also make great sense. The first hundred minutes being very contemplative, the next hour there is a great sense of electronic music blending with instruments. When 'Yo-In' was performed for the first time, it caused mixed reaction - to say the least. Eloy's blending of Japanese (or Asian) music with electronics caused a ripple in the music scene. The extensive

book details a lot of what went into producing this work, from his work at the institute of Sonology in Utrecht, the nature of the some 200 percussion instruments used as well as the field recordings, but also the reception of the work, make this an excellent read. For which you have time, while listening to the work: it lasts three hours and forty minutes. The title translates as 'reverberations'. The background, if we may call it like that, is made up of electronic processes of percussions and field recordings, although perhaps a lot of the time not so recognizable. The foreground is filled with the shimmering tones of bells, percussion, toms, and who knows what else - there are a few pictures in the book, but apparently the various performances have never been properly filmed.

This work too has a meditative character, but throughout to a lesser extent than 'Ahata-Anahata' - there is no doubt more action here. This too is a beautiful work, especially the longitude works very well. Sit back and listen: there is not much you can do. (FdW)

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