

THE CALL

Personal impressions on music composition by Michael Fahres

German composer Michael Fahres (b. 1951, Bamberg, Germany) draws inspiration for his compositions from the acoustic properties of the space in which he works. For this project, he created a piece of music in which the North Sea Canal plays a central role. To be more precise, he thought of two small islands with their two lighthouses that mark the beginning and the end of this channel: Fort Island and Lighthouse Island.

The piece initially seems naturalistic with the passing sounds of road traffic and the apparent echoes of machines from the past. Ultimately, it is the multitude of sounds that transform into abstracted sounds that detach themselves from their surroundings. They then stick together again to form a rhythm that tries to create order in the aural chaos. In the end, one of the sounds will dominate.

To give you an impression: the sounds of traffic make their way through the water; they cut through the shipping lane of the North Sea Canal. Slowly, the echoes of the past loom up, within which the present inevitably pushes itself forward again. You fantasise about agricultural machines, creaking wagons, steam trains and boats. The bleak wind that rushes through the polder takes all the sounds with it in the direction of the sea.

On the way back - there seems to be a turning point in the piece - you are pulled under water. For a moment you go under, and when you surface, the rain splashes on the water's surface. Slowly, reality swells again: industry, but also nature. Or is it just the sounds of birds, crickets and grass helmets in the wind? Is it after all the fact the factories, cars and machines that produce these sounds? Is there room for the different aspects that try to live side by side in this area? The past is pulled under water, the sound of a train is silenced and swallowed up by powerful waves. One thing is certain: in the end, the water is always the boss here...

With this 15-minute piece of music, Fahres tries to make the listener 'see' what a possible future natural disaster could sound like, just as art in all its forms does not only want to show beauty, but also make painful, evil or bad things visible. Things that may sound less beautiful. Industry/civilisation and nature get out of balance and the negative consequences of this are audible.

The Call is therefore not only a composition/installation, but also an acoustic manifesto that signals a future problem. Michael Fahres dedicated The Call to his recently deceased father.

Nancy Hoffmann
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