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| Kröpfl, Francisco (1931--) |
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| Francisco Kröpfl is an Argentinean composer and researcher. His work as a pedagogue through the development of several generations of Latin American composers is widely recognized, alongside his intense activity in the diffusion of 20th-century music through the Agrupación Nueva Música (New Music Group), founded by Juan Carlos Paz, of whom Kröpfl was a follower. Specializing in electroacoustic music, Kröpfl has been a pioneer in composition with electronic media. In 1958, he founded the Estudio de Fonología Musical (EFM) at the University of Buenos Aires, the first laboratory of its kind in Latin America. He subscribes to integral serialism (the employment of series for aspects other than pitch, such as duration), an orientation he has applied in an original and personal manner in his works. Kröpfl has explored the expressive potential of the human voice both in his works for voice and as an instrumental accompaniment. In this vein, Orillas (1988) became a paradigmatic work, earning him the 1988 Magistère Prize in Bourges, France. He was president of the Argentine Federation of Electroacoustic Music and judged international competitions of electroacoustic music. |
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In this vein, Orillas (1988) became a paradigmatic work, earning him the 1988 Magistère Prize in Bourges, France. He was president of the Argentine Federation of Electroacoustic Music and judged international competitions of electroacoustic music.  Of Hungarian origin and a nationalized Argentine, Francisco Kröpfl was born in Tamisoara (Romania) in 1931 and came to Argentina with his family in 1932. His early musical studies with Hungarian teacherstook place between 1940 and 1947. His early compositions, using a free atonal discourse, reveal the influence of the Second Viennese School (Schönberg, Berg, Webern). *Música para clarinete y flauta*(1951) was the first piece composed under the tutelage of Juan Carlos Paz, with whom he studied composition between 1948 and 1953. Afterwards they remained in touch through the activities of diffusion of the works of the Agrupación Nueva Música(New Music Association).  Although Kröpfl began to employ the dodecaphonic technique in the second piece of the *Dos piezas líricas para piano* (1949) and in *Tres canciones* (1951), his first entirely dodecaphonic pieces are the *Tres Piezas Fáciles*(1952). To this same period belong the *Cuatro canciones de Aldo Maranca* (1952) for voice, flute and clarinet, the third piece being based on the rhythmic organization techniques of Pierre Boulez. Inspired by Anton Webern, Kröpfl wrote *Variaciones para piano*(1953), his first serial piece (serial in rhythm, pitch and intensity), which he subsequently reworked in the *Cuarteto mixto*(1953) for clarinet, mute trumpet, viola and piano.  The years between 1956 and 1958 are definitive for understanding the development of Kröpfl’s ideas, as well as his subsequent output. The technical principles of integral serialism were transmitted to Kröpfl by Pierre Boulez in a series of meetings of the two in Buenos Aires in 1954; Kröpfl began to apply his own version in *Una canción para Barítono*(1955), and then in *Música 1956*(1956) for solo clarinet, and in a more organic fashion in *Música 1957* (1957) for soprano, guitar, vibraphone, piano, and percussion. Although in *Música 1957* Kröpfl considered the idea in an organic, integral form for the first time, the first strongly systematic organization of all parameters becomes concrete in *Música 1958* for piano.  Kröpfl was acquainted with the earliest electronic compositions of Stockhausen, Berio and Maderna. In 1958, he wrote the prologue for, and translated (with Guillermo Lücke), *Elektronische Musik* by Eimer et al., which was the first edition in Spanish of the Cuaderno I of *Die Reihe*. That same year, he founded the *Estudio de Fonología Musical*, which he presided over until its closure in 1973. He also startedcomposing with electronic media in *Ejercício de Impulsos* and *Ejercicio Electrónico de Texturas* (both 1959), *Ejercicio de Ruido Blanco* (1960). *Dialogos I y II (Dialogs I and II)* as well as Mutación I (1969), reveal Kröpfl’s keenness to find an integral form through the continuous modulation of distinct dimensions of the sound material. *Música para Sintetizador*(1970), the last piece he composed at the EFM, was composed with a synthethizer controlled by voltage, designed and built at EFM, and completely novel to Latin America.  During this period, he also worked with traditional instruments and became interested in the relationship between image and sound. *Dimension* (1960) (for two guitars, piano, and percussion) is the music for a short film. Here, Kröpfl applied the principles of Stockhausen’s formant rhythm technique, together with Joseph Schillinger’s ‘principle of wave interference’. He also produced the music for *Flash Gordon in the Frozen Kingdom* (1968), presented at the Di Tella Institute in the context of the Bienal Internacional de la Historieta.  In the mid-1960s, Kröpfl drew away from serialism and started to experiment with some of the era’s aesthetics. He explored analogic notation in *Música 1966* (1966), graphic scores in *Variations on December 1952* (1966), and aleatory techniques in *Esquemas de Improvisación Grupal* (1967/69).  While teaching between 1967 and 1971 as Professor of the Chair of Electronic music and acting as director of the laboratory of CLAEM, the Centro Latinoamericano de Altos Estudios Musicales (Latinamerican Center of Musical Higher Studies) of the Di Tella Institute, he contributed to give shape and organicity for the teaching and composition of music with electronic media. He has been influential in the generation of a valuable corpus of foundational pieces of Latin American composers.  When CLAEM shut down and its equipment was transferred to CICMAT, the Centro de Investigación en Comunicación Masiva, Arte y Tecnología (Mass Communication, Art and Technology Research Center), Kröpfl continued teaching young composers interested in electroacoustic music (while also directing the Contemporary Music Department between 1972 and 1977) and there produced *Tónicas y Giros* (1973) and *Pequeños Seres* (1973), his first work with a synththizer (an ARP one).  He was awarded the Guggenheim fellowship (1977 – 1978). Before leaving for the United States and Europe, he composed *Trío 1977, Música 1974* for flute and piano and, with Gustavo Beytelmann, the film musical score for *Quebracho* (1974). At Columbia-Princeton Universities laboratory, he produced three electronic pieces, *Nocturno* (1977), *Scherzo* (1977), and *Música para Percusión (Music for percussion)* (1997). On his return to Buenos Aires he explored music for computers with *Ejercicios para computadora* (1979).  Kröpfl´s teaching work, focused on the analysis and composition of twentieth-century music, intensified in the eighties, the same period during which his fundamental ideas about the organization of rhythm and the micromodes and hexachordal modes were widely spread. At the same time, he became the director of LIPM, the Laboratorio de Investigación y Producción Musical (Laboratory of Research and Production of Music), inaugurated in 1982, which reached international prestige through programs of collaboration and exchange with similar institutions in the United States of America and in Europe.  A persistent streak in Kröpfl’s music and verifiable in, for example, *Tres Improvisaciones* (1983) for flute, in *Polimonodía para cuatro instrumentos* (1984), *Pequeño requiem para una voz (Tiny requiem for one voice)* (1986), *Tres poemas de Lorca, Ballet* (1987) and *Orillas*, is the mutation of the material, the transformations of which reorient the formal direction of the work.  Between 1987 and 2005, Kröpfl received commissionsfrom Cologne Radio, Germany (WDR); from the French republic; and from INA-GRM, LIEM and IMEB to compose pieces of electroacoustic music. These included *Metrópolis Buenos Aires. Temas y Variaciones sobre una ciudad* (1989), a ‘sound picture’ of the city of Buenos Aires; *Espejo Distorsionante* (1994); the mapuche indigenous people’s trilogy *Vientos* (1996), *Al Sur (*1997) and *El Regreso* (2000); *El pájaro* (1995); *El vuelo* (2000); and *Lento come le algue* (2005).  Kröpfl retired from institutional public activity in 2006. His instrumental production has increased since 2000 as new commissions have been received. He has written trios for various groups *(Trio 02, Trio 03 and Trio 08)*; a *Quartet Number 2b* (2006) for strings, flute, French horn and trumpet; *Divergencias* (2007) for ten instruments; and *Relato* (2006) for reciter, flute, clarinet, violin, and violoncello. Amongst his most recent works is *La tercera es la vencida* (2011), a staged divertimento with lyrics by Oscar Steinberg. Writings Kröpfl, Francisco. Reflexiones sobre el fenómeno musical. Buenos Aires, Ediciones Nueva Música, 1987.  Kröpfl, Francisco. Propuesta para una mitología de análisis rítmico, col. De  M. del Carmen Aguilar, Simposio de análisis musical, INM, EA., 1989.  Kröpfl, Francisco. Reflexiones sobre la composición con medios electrónicos, Simposio del Groupe Musique Expérimentale de Bourges (GMEB), 1992.  Kröpfl, Francisco. ‘An Approach to the Analysis of Electroacoustic Music’, Bourges Academy: Analysis in Electroacoustic Music. Bourges: Acteon-Mnemosyne, (1996), pp. 322-327.  Kröpfl, Francisco. ‘Experiences and Reflections on Electroacoustic Music’, Bourges Academy: Aesthetic and Electroacoustic Music. Bourges:  Acteon-Mnemosyne, (1995) pp. 60-64.  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| Further reading:  (Salgado)  (Aguilar) |