

Music statement

Anna Xambó, PhD
annaxambo.me

Background

I am a trained musician, composer, performer, and producer of experimental electronic music. I have been a member of a couple of bands over and I am co-founder of [Carpal Tunnel](#), an experimental electronic music label, which is known for its distinctive brand of sound.

Music style: Less is more

I have published two solo recordings under the pseudonym peterMann: “[init](#)” (2010, [Carpal Tunnel](#)) and “[On the Go](#)” (2013, [Carpal Tunnel](#)). My solo works are known for their unique sound of working with hypnotizing basses, industrial ambiances, and noise as concept art. Overall, I am heavily inspired by minimalism as lifestyle.

Influences

My influences span from the classics, such as John Cage, Steve Reich, Alvin Lucier, La Monte Young, György Ligeti, Stockhausen, and Phillip Glass, to abstract drone, minimal avant techno, and IDM music, such as Phill Niblock, Autechre, Mika Vainio, Pan Sonic, Sunn O))), and Francisco López, to name a few. A common denominator is the exploration of new sounds and the boundaries of the musical language. I also like blues and jazz concerts. A principle: I will move mountains for listening to good authentic music!

In the past I enjoyed pop-rock bands, most of them related to drone music style, such as The Velvet Underground, Brian Eno, Kraftwerk; krautrock bands (e.g. Cluster, Can); and indie-drone bands (e.g. Sonic Youth, My Bloody Valentine, Spacemen 3).

Activism

I chose a male pseudonym for my works with electronic music because I wanted to contribute to the minimal techno scene, which has been always a male dominated space, in which the real identity is hidden. Accordingly, I wanted to keep both my identity and gender anonymous. Lately, I have been reconsidering this position inspired by female activist groups and individuals, who work towards making more visible women’s music works, e.g. AGF, Liz Dobson, and Female’s Pressure, among others. Thus, I keep the same nickname, but I do not necessarily hide my gender anymore.

Besides performing, I like to co-organize concerts and help to create and curate alternative sonic experiences, and contribute to the local and international experimental electronic music scene. I have co-organized live coding sessions in Barcelona: Live Coding Sessions (Niu, 03/15/2012), Live Coding Sessions II (Niu, 03/22/2013), and Perspectives on Multichannel Live Coding with 16 speakers (Sala Polivalent UPF Poblenou, 10/04/2013). Also, I have co-organized two concerts for the WAC 2016 conference hosted by Georgia Tech in Atlanta. One of these concerts was audience device participation only, a successful challenge in terms of attendance and experience. I would like to continue co-organizing concerts of this nature wherever I am based.

From classical training to DIY

After a classical training on interpreting others' pieces with piano, I remember discovering by myself that I could compose my own music using traditional instruments (e.g. Spanish guitar) and electric instruments (e.g. bass guitar). We shared music sketches with colleagues and learned to compose together. Software tools for sound and music came soon later. We also had to learn the new tools by ourselves (e.g. FruityLoops, SoundForge, Cubase, Max MSP/PD, etc). In the following years, a range of sound and music technologies has emerged. These technologies allow us for multiple ways of approaching sound and music, and learning computing on the way, in a DIY fashion.

Over the 1990s I composed, played the bass guitar and sung as part of the early Spanish post-punk, indie and post-rock scene. With my first band, we learned how to compose and create a decent song just with an electric guitar, a bass guitar, a drum set, and two female voices. With my second band, we explored how to compose instrumental music together between 5-6 musicians (electric guitars, bass guitars, keyboards, sampler, drum set, percussion set, and a vibraphone) by: improvising numerous hours, learning improvisation methods like John Zorn's Cobra from the hand of Orquesta del Caos, and collaborating with other bands and individuals. After a hiatus period, I have continued working with instrumental music but focusing on electronic music.

I have been making electronic music since mid-2000s working with my portable audio recorder, Ableton Live, Supercollider and DIY instruments. I have been exploring live coding practices, and the use of tangible user interfaces for real time performance. Lately, I have become interested in applying machine listening techniques to my practice. I am also interested in working with MC voices (typical in hip hop and grime scene) as textures, inspired from living in London and Atlanta, GA, and exploring approaches to DIY portable electronic music kits for music performance.