



A-RONNE

‘THEATRE OF THE EAR’

LUCIANO BERIO & SÉBASTIEN ROUX

JORIS LACOSTE, HYOID VOICES

& CLAIRE CROIZÉ

“Joris Lacoste and Ensemble HYOID voices dazzle
with an immersive staging of Luciano Berio’s A-Ronne.”

– Christophe Candoni, Sceneweb –

“The HYOID voices collective is exemplary (...) The listening comfort
is optimal, regardless of our position, inviting the singers to strictly respect the dynamics indicated by Berio, from mouth noises
to outbursts, without being tempted to overact in order to
be heard more effectively. ”

– Michèle Tosi, Resmusica –

“Where are the musicians? Already with us, but we won’t realize it until A-Ronne begins, an «ear theater» without characters or plot, spoken and sung by eight virtuosos with amplified voices. Like us, the singers are on the move, but theirs is controlled by Claire Croizé’s inventive choreography and conductor Filip Rathé’s ultra-precise musical direction.”

– Sophie Bourdais, Télérama Sortir –

“Berio’s timeless and as enchanting as ever A-Ronne (1974-75) can of course be performed in concert, but the new production by La Muse en Circuit and HYOID Voices manages to put it into space while bypassing the overplayed theatricality that, paradoxically, concert performances sometimes induce”

– Pierre Rigaudière, Diapason –

“At a time when almost all words have lost theirs, nothing is more poignant than to hear singers inveighing against each other via the phoneme. A-Ronne’s strength lies in translating all this into a form that’s neither hermetic nor raunchy: the right dose of theatricality to maintain contact, and a modest use of technology to avoid immersive gadgetry.”

– Thomas Corlin, Mouvement –

Theatre of the ear

**Live performance
with headphones for 8
voices and electronics**
50 min.

Wearing headphones, the audience wanders freely through the space among eight singers-dancers-actors in a 'theatre of the ear', in a unique experience where language becomes a playground of sound and emotion. Here, words don't just tell the story: they transform, repeat, distort and are reborn, revealing all the richness and complexity of human communication.

In this audacious re-reading, the HYOID Voices ensemble and Joris Lacoste reinvent Luciano Berio's A-Ronne by playing with the codes of radio and electro-acoustics. Wearing wireless headphones, the audience is plunged into an individual and immersive listening experience, where amplified voices, reverberated or played through the headphones, mingle with electronics. An extraordinary sonic and sensory adventure, where each spectator becomes an actor in his or her own listening experience.

Theatre of the ear

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The Berios's A-Ronne

Berio wrote two versions of A-Ronne. The first, for five actors, premiered in the Netherlands in 1974, while the second version, for eight voices, premiered in Liège the following year.

Luciano Berio conceived A-Ronne as a kind of musical documentary, based on a text in six different languages by Edoardo Sanguineti. The Italian composer interweaves extracts and allusions to a host of other texts: translations of the Bible, Dante's Divine Comedy, Goethe's Faust, the Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, and snippets of texts by Roland Barthes.

Luciano Berio proceeds by dissecting, analyzing, decomposing and recomposing voices from 'A' to 'Ronne' ('Ronne' being the last letter of the old Italian alphabet, after 'Z', 'Ette' and 'Conne'). The situations thus listed around Edoardo Sanguineti's poem offer a palette of games and expressions, in the manner of a naive vocal painting. The range of situations proposed always leads back to an elementary situation, to recognizable, familiar and often obvious feelings and states of mind.

«The text sometimes fades away to make way for phonemes, distancing meaning in favor of the sound value of the word: 'the relationship between the two levels (grammatical and acoustic) is the essence of the infinite possibi-

lities of human speech and song', declared the composer in reference to A-Ronne, originally intended for radio broadcast.» - Michèle Tosi, Resmusica, 22.09.2023.

The stage set-up

Such a radophonic and vocal piece could not lend itself better to the game of listening through headphones, allowing a liberation from the fixed frames of the stage.

Each spectator, equipped with wireless headphones, is immersed in a collective and individual listening experience, and can move freely around the space. The HYOID voices singers, also 'helmeted', mingle with the audience, moving in choreographed movements. They appear or disappear, group together or disperse, in a dance of colored or dark lights. The audience is no longer separated from the performance, but participates fully in it.

The use of headphones opens up a whole range of possibilities, not least the types of performance venues: A-Ronne can be performed not in conventional theaters or stages, but in large, unusual spaces such as empty warehouses or underground parking lots.

Joris Lacoste, intention note

«Luciano Berio has precisely defined the genre he calls 'theater of the ear', a type of performance whose theatricality is properly internal to vocal expression: it is in the movements of the sung word, in the tension between vocal articulation and meaning, in the interplay of the most heterogeneous registers, in the relationships of harmony and accompaniment that all 'theater' is situated.

There are no characters to speak of, still less plot or argument. Phrases, words, spoken, sung or whispered (and always amplified) voices are the real characters of the play. Language itself (languages) is the whole narrative, from A to Z (Z = «Ronne»). It's a kind of mental theater.

The very first version of A-Ronne was a radio play broadcast on Dutch station KRO in 1974. Rather than dramatize it (something Berio opposed all his life), I wanted to rethink the piece from this original context.

The headphone listening situation thus enables Berio's score to be precisely respected, with all its acoustic subtleties. Moreover, **the mobility it induces breaks down the frontality between stage and hall, making it impossible to construct a single image.** The idea is to explore the gap between what is heard (the same thing for everyone) and what is seen (which depends on each person's movements).

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The prologue, commissioned from Sébastien Roux, introduces the spectator to this type of listening: by playing on the natural acoustics of the real space and those of the electronics, and by gradually mixing artificial sounds with the live voices of the singers, it justifies the use of headphones which, when A-Ronne begins, create a listening space in each person that is both intimate and collective.

Throughout Berio's piece, the singers and conductor mingle with the audience, from which they emerge in physical and vocal gestures that follow Berio's score. These choreographies of appearance and disappearance, grouping and dispersal, are supported by ever-changing lighting effects.

By placing A-Ronne in the midst of a listening fiction, by letting the audience wander in search of the performers, by working on positions and relationships in space, by seeking a gestuality intrinsic to vocal expression, by using addresses that are alternately concrete and indirect, I believe we can do justice to Berio's 'theater of the ear', while inventing a new type (intimate and populated, dreamlike and concrete) of opera.»



Distribution

LUCIANO BERIO / SÉBASTIEN ROUX

composers

JORIS LACOSTE

artistic and stage director

CLAIRE CROIZÉ

choreographer and assistant director

FILIP RATHÉ

musical director

HYOID voices

Maris Pajuste, Naomi Beeldens, Ellen Wils, Fabienne Seveillac, Andreas Halling, Eymeric Mosca, Arnout Lems, Pascal Zurek

FLORIAN LEDUC / NICOLAS BATS

lights and scenography

FABIENNE SEVEILLAC

artistic co-conception

ANNE-CATHERINE KUNZ

costume advisor

Patrick Delges (Centre Henri Pousseur)

sound

Marjolaine Carme

sound designer

Jan-Simon De Lille

stage manager

Laure Lang

headphones manager



CLAIRE CROIZÉ

For Claire Croizé (France, 1979), the body is a sensitive instrument, resonating with the dancer's complex emotional life.

Claire's work starts from what is happening in the studio: she looks at the body to find a solution to the questions brought up during the creation process. Her dedication to the work of movement and physicality allows her to start from the smallest building blocks of a performance. The past years Claire started to experiment with creating in silence, letting her dancers discover their own musicality and develop a personal movement language.

Claire graduated from P.A.R.T.S. in 2000. Her graduation project, 'Donne-moi quelque chose qui ne meure pas', is hailed by the French press as one of the discoveries of PARTS@PARIS. She quickly follows with the solo 'Blowing Up' (2002), produced by PACT Zollverein (Essen) and the trio Runway #1 (2003), created for the Off Limits festival. Claire starts working under the support of WP Zimmer (Antwerp) in 2006, and premiered at STUK (Leuven) with 'Affected', an internationally acclaimed performance consisting of three solos for

three women on Gustav Mahler's 'Kindertotenlieder'. This was also the first collaboration with Jan Maertens, her regular light designer.

In 2009, she pursued her work on Mahler's music with 'The Farewell' (Prix Jardin d'Europe). During the 2011 Mahler Festival in CC Hasselt and the Festival van Vlaanderen in Kortrijk, she creates a version with live music by the Oxalys ensemble: 'The Last Farewell'. Claire also works with live music, by the Belgian Baroque band B'Rock, on 'Vor deinem Thron', a solo on the last compositions of Bach (2010, Klarafestival/Kaaithheater). In 2012, she creates 'Chant éloigné', a group piece based on music by composers of the Second Viennese School. 'Primitive' (2014) is an open air creation made for three dancers. It premiered in Paris at the Atelier de Paris/Carolyn Carlson during the June Events festival, and toured extensively all over Europe. In 'EVOL', a piece for four dancers which premieres in October 2016 in STUK, Claire takes a step into the world of pop music with music by David Bowie.

Claire also dances for Caterina Sagna, Andy Deneys, Étienne Guilloteau, Hooman Sharifi, Jean-Luc Ducourt, Philippe Blanchard, Alexander Baervoets, Anabel Schellekens and Kris Verdonck.

HYOID

Artistic direction

Fabienne Seveillac & Andreas Halling

www.hyoidvoices.com

HYOID is a Brussels-based group of classically trained vocal soloists specializing in new music and transdisciplinary performance. The group strives to challenge and expand traditional concert formats, while cultivating close partnerships with composers, performers and artists of its generation. They perform a cappella as well as with instruments, tape or electronics, and adapt their line-up to each production.

HYOID gets its name from the U-shaped hyoid-bone, a bone helping with diction, swallowing and breathing; the only free-floating bone in the human body.

Highlights include creations with Jennifer Walshe (*A History of the Voice*), Maija Hynninen & Benjamin Vandewalle (*Journal d'un usager de l'espace*), Mauro Lanza (*RELICS* - with Spectra ensemble), Bernhard Lang (*GAME 245: The Mirror Stage*), Myriam Van Imschoot (*newpolyphonies*); in 2023, Anthony Braxton (*Thunder Music*), H. Goerger & C. Trapani (*WORK SONGS*) and *A-Ronne*.

Among other projects, in 2025 HYOID will create *WASTORIES*, staged performance and installation with composer Eva Reiter, librettist Hannah Dübgen, visual artists Koen Broos and tour *A-Ronne* in France and abroad. In 2026, HYOID will premiere *SIDÉRATIONS*, chamber opera by composer Georges Aperghis and stage director-choreographer Johanne Saunier with United Instruments of Lucilin (LUX).

From 2020 to 2023, the ensemble was in residence at Muziekcentrum de Bijloke in Ghent. HYOID has received support from organizations like Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung, in France from IMPULS Neue Musik, the 'Aide à l'écriture' and 'Fonds de Création Lyrique', and the Flemish government.



JORIS LACOSTE

Joris Lacoste was born in 1973. He lives and works in Paris. He has been writing for theatre and radio since 1996, and has been creating and performing his own shows since 2003.

He created '9 lyriques for actress and snare drum' in 2005 with Stéphanie Béghain, then 'Purgatoire' in 2007 at the Théâtre National de la Colline (Paris) - an institution for which he is also an associate author. From 2007 to 2009, he was co-director of the Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers (Aubervilliers, France). Borrowing from literature, theatre, visual arts, music and sound poetry, his work is structured by a deep commitment to research. Joris Lacoste has initiated two collective projects: 'W' in collaboration with Jeanne Revel (2003), which aims to study represented action and produces,

among other things, 'Jeux W' and 'L'Encyclopédie de la parole' (2007), a cross-disciplinary exploration of oral forms leading to the show 'Parlement' in 2009, and then to the series 'Suites chorales' from 2013.

Since 2004, Joris Lacoste has also been interested in the possible artistic uses of hypnosis, through an activity he calls 'hypnography'. He has produced several pieces based on this new research, including 'Le vrai spectacle' - presented at the Festival d'automne de Paris in 2011 and at the Centre Pompidou in 2012 - and the exhibition '12 Rêves préparés' at the galerie gb agency in Paris.



FILIP RATHÉ

Filip Rathé (1966) graduated from the Ghent Conservatory in piano and choral conducting. He obtained his master's degree in musicology from Professor Herman Sabbe at Ghent University. Today he is a lecturer at the music colleges of Ghent and Antwerp.

Since 1993 he has been the artistic director and conductor of SPECTRA. This contemporary music ensemble has given concerts in Europe and South America and has premiered over 130 new composi-

tions. Filip Rathé has also been guest conductor of the Flanders Symphony Orchestra, the Flemish Radio Choir and several ensembles, including I Solisti del Vento, Ensemble Hermes, Ensemble Aquarius (N) and Musiques Nouvelles.

His compositions include: 'Canção do Caminho' (SSAATTBB, 1998), 'O ultimo poema' (ensemble, 2001), 'Das Utopias' (17 string players, 2003), 'Canção de vidro' (16 voices, 2004) and 'La velocidad de las Tinieblas' (amplified voice and ensemble, 2005). At the request of the Neue Vokalsolisten Stuttgart, he created a cyclus 'No marmore de tua bunda' for six solo voices.

His works have been performed by the Flemish Radio Choir, ASKO (N), SPECTRA, Collegium Instrumentale Brugense, Exaudi, Kremerata Baltica and Neue Vokalsolisten Stuttgart, among others.



SÉBASTIEN ROUX

Sébastien Roux (born in 1977) writes electronic music which he presents in various formats: CDs, records, public listening sessions, sound installations, sound walks, radio pieces.

He experiments with listening conditions, the concept of soundscape and composition within formal constraints. In 2011 he started to develop an approach based on translation principles, analysing the structures of pre-existing artworks (visual, musical, literary) and transposing them into musical scores for new works. This process resulted in the creation of *Quatuor* (2011) and *Nouvelle* (2012). The most recent development of this translation principle is 'Inevitable Music', a methodology for applying the rules and means of Sol Lewitt's wall drawings to sound.

In addition to his solo works, Sébastien Roux collaborates with other artists, including the author Célia Houdart and the scenographer Olivier Vadrot, on transdisciplinary and in-situ projects. He has created the sound environment for choreographic pieces by DD Dorvillier, Sylvain Prunenec and Rémy Héritier.

He has worked at IRCAM (Paris), as musical assistant to Georges Aperghis, Bruno Mantovani and Gérard Pesson, and was musical assistant to Morton Subotnick, for *Parades* and *Changes*, replays by Anne Collod/Anna Halprin.

Sébastien Roux has received commissions and residencies from the Westdeutscher Rundfunk, the Groupe de Recherches Musicales, La Muse en Circuit - CNCM (Alfortville), CESARE - CNCM (Reims), the Groupe de Musique Expérimental de Marseille and Issue Project Room. He was awarded the Villa Médicis hors-les-murs grant by the French Institute (USA 2012) and the Radio Art competition by La Muse en Circuit (2005).

He is a laureate of the Prix de Rome, and was in residence at the Académie de France in Rome in 2015-16.

Agenda

2025

16.11.2025 | 1 performance, Cité Musicale de Metz

27.06.2025 | 2 performances, Festival Pulsations, Bordeaux

05.04.2025 | 2 performances, Opéra of Reims, Reims

03.04.2025 | 1 performance, Lieu Unique, Nantes

29.03.2025 | 2 performances, La Maison de la Musique, Nanterre

26.01.2025 | 2 performances, Halles de Schaerbeek / BOZAR, Bruxelles (BE)

2023

10.11.2023 | MAC – Maison des Arts et de la Culture, Créteil

16 & 17.09.2023 | Festival Musica, Strasbourg.

03.06.2023 | Création | Chinastraat, Gand (BE) | in partnership with Muziekcentrum de Bijloke

Mentions & contact

Photos credits

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