



# Voice Portraits.

Music Theatre by Alessandro Bosetti.

- What do you want from me ?
- I'd like to make a portrait of your voice.
- It's my portrait then ?
- No. I think that you and your voice are not the same thing.

## Project description.

A family of voice-portraits lives its life in a sound universe. A sonic and affective texture in between Renaissance polyphony and family chatter. Voices with no body, each one of them being mother, father, daughter and sister of the others.

Alessandro Bosetti, sound artist and composer, paints a series of voice-portraits based on field research and conversations recorded in Italy during a summer. He chose and collected six voices over three generations. Three female and three male. Documents were then deconstructed and recomposed within a palimpsest integrating three elements: 1) a polyphonic composition for vocal ensemble 2) an electro acoustic and radiophonic collage of thousands of voice fragments 3) a score for a portraitist.

The show takes off from a simple and intimate situation which grows denser and more complex over time. At first the portraitist is seated in the middle of the audience while the five vocalists are mingling with it. Portraitist introduces each one of the voices to the audience. The family is deconstructed and reconstructed repeatedly. Real drama occurs between the voices : attraction, separation, friendships and love.

The audience experiences the immersive feeling of delving into an imaginary and magical community through an enthralling and polyphonic musical writing. A cloud of voices, loaded with energy as a thunderstorm encircles it. Portraitist has the role of transmitting a multiple narrative to the audience, which becomes a very tight crowd, at once claustrophobic and nourishing (as proper to most families).

The resulting family is a fragmented network that moves from a rigid division of roles to an abstract phonetic proliferation. In the background, half hidden: the identities of the six anonymous voice-models which are speaking of themselves and of a loved and hated country in a daily language imbued with actuality.

Bodily, physical and political identities count here for little or less than usual. Only the voices count, which, as markers of an absolute generality, resemble to souls to which an identity has not yet been attributed.

## **On stage.**

Neuevoclasolisten Stuttgart - 5 singers (2 men and 3 women)  
Alessandro Bosetti, the portraitist

## **Setting.**

A scene on which the audience, itself encircled by loudspeakers, encircles the singers and the portraitist.

The audience is seated on a spiral shape (the singers are placed within the audience at first).

The light explores the anonymity of the voice through radical contrasts between moments of almost absolute darkness (ambiguity between recorded voices and live voices) and other moment with full room light ( ambiguity between the voices of the performers and those of the audience, who is singing ?).

Costumes (Canedicoda / Giovanni Donadini)

## **Threefold writing.**

- 1) A tight polyphonic writing for a 5 pieces vocal ensemble, seated within the audience and present from the beginning to the end of the piece. The audience is caught in a tangled and enveloping polyphonic texture, whose vibrations are experienced physically due to the closeness of the singers.
- 2) A collage of thousands of voice fragments taken from the original recorded documents and emitted by the loudspeakers. A composite landscape of vocal materials and an alternatively monumental and subtle proliferation of phonemes which is sonic texture and radio-collage at once.
- 3) A score for a portraitist. The one who guides the audience through the voice landscapes, at once unfaithful translator, radiophonic host and demiurge of the choral narrative taking shape.

All portraitist and narrative parts can be translated in the local language while the the recomposition of Italian recorded documents favours phonetic and abstract aspects and is suitable to all audiences.

## Alessandro Bosetti.

Born Milano, Italy, 1973 is a composer, performer and sound artist whose works delve on musicality of spoken language, utilising misunderstandings, translations and interviews as compositional tools. His works for voice and electronics blur the line between electro acoustic composition, aural writing and performance.

He has been presenting his pieces for voice and electronics in leading venues as the GRM/ Presences Electroniques festival in Paris, Festival d'Automne a Paris, the San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, the Liquid Architecture Festival in Melbourne, the Festival Les Musiques in Marseille, Roulette and The Stone in NYC and Cafe OTO in London among many others.

One of the most innovative radio artists of his generation he created a vast body of work of hybrid, award winning, text-sound and radio compositions for the main Radio and Electro Acoustic Music studios in Europe, most notably for the historical WDR's Studio Akustische Kunst in Cologne and Deutschland Radio Kultur in Berlin, Hessischer Rundfunk in Frankfurt, Radio France in Paris and ABC National Radio in Melbourne and Sydney.

His recent projects include Plane / Talea voices archive presented in a series of compositions and performances and recently featured in Savvy Radio the Documenta 14 radio performances program. Moreover "Guryong - Voice as Trash" for Australian National Radio ABC, and the autobiographical music theatre piece "Journal de Bord" co produced by gmem-CNCM-marseille, The Muse in Circuit - CNCM, Césaré - CNCM - Reims and the Nouveau Theatre de Montreuil - CDN.

Most recent commissions are for the Festival D'Automne in Paris for accordionist Vincent Lhermet and the ECLAT festival in Stuttgart for clarinetist Gareth Davis. He has written extensively for the voice, notably for the ensembles Neuevocalisten in Stuttgart and Maulwerker in Berlin.

Alessandro Bosetti has performed widely in Europe, Asia and the United States, either solo, at the head of his ensemble Trophies with Tony Buck and Kenta Nagai or in collaboration with other performers such as Jennifer Walshe, Tomomi Adachi or pianist Chris Abrahams. Alessandro Bosetti teaches every summer in the Phonurgia Nova master classes in Arles.

<https://www.melgun.net> <https://soundcloud.com/alessandro-bosetti>







## Neue Vocalsolisten Stuttgart.

They are researchers, discoverers, adventurers and idealists. Their partners are specialist ensembles and radio orchestras, opera houses and the free theater scene, electronic studios and countless organisers of contemporary music festivals and concert series in the world.

The Neue Vocalsolisten established as an ensemble specialising in the interpretation of contemporary vocal music in 1984. Founded under the artistic management of Musik der Jahrhunderte, the vocal chamber ensemble has been artistically independent since the year 2000. Each of the seven concert and opera soloists, with a collective range reaching from coloratura soprano over countertenor to "basso profundo", shapes the work on chamber music and the co-operation with the composers and other interpreters through his/her distinguished artistic creativity.

The ensemble's chief interest lies on research: exploring new sounds, new vocal techniques and new forms of articulation, whereby great emphasis is placed on establishing a dialogue with composers. Each year, the ensemble premieres about twenty new works. Central to the group's artistic concept are the areas of music theater and the interdisciplinary work with electronics, video, visual arts and literature, as well as the juxtaposition of contrasting elements found in ancient and contemporary music.

<https://neuevocalsolisten.de>.

## Giovanni Donadini / Canedicoda

Canedicoda is a multi-disciplinary artist who works in music (under the alias Ottaven) and performance as well as fashion and design. He has developed a rich, personally distinctive universe that is constantly changing but always immediately recognisable. A pivotal figure bringing and spreading to Italy several innovative and liminal currents of artistic, stylistic and musical pursuit (we recall, among others, his Piattaforma Fantastica), his experience includes a vast number of projects in cooperation with record labels, non-profit spaces, groups and individual artists both in Italy and beyond. Canedicoda has conducted his own personal research into language, style and method since 2003, working with Marsèll and Marsèlleria, Netmage Festival, Live Arts Week, Le Dictateur, Plusdesign Gallery, C2C, Istituto Svizzero, NERO magazine, Carhartt, Replay, Adidas, Vic Matietà, Dumb Skateboards.

[www.canedicoda.com](http://www.canedicoda.com)  
[ottaven.bandcamp.com](http://ottaven.bandcamp.com)



## Work phases.

### 1) Recordings (spring 2020)

I would like to start working in the frame of an itinerant residency in order to collect the voices I want to portray.

I would like to spend a week visiting and recording the six chosen people and spending half a day with each of them. Such voices are chosen by gut feeling: they belong to people who are dear to me.

Although I make a brief profile below (to the benefit of those who read the project), the disclosure of their identity is not particularly important for the success of the project.

As for painted portraits I make use of them as models posing for me and donating their voices which will be presented anonymously. (Their names will be featured in the show's credits but not during the show itself).

They are :

(Milano) An octogenarian friend from Liguria, founder of a market research company in the seventies, then sold for a good profit, then patron of the arts, film producer, father and supporting figure. Now fragile but always poetic, philosophical, cultivated and taciturn.

(Milano) Elderly Milanese lady, choreographer, founder of a long-standing company, modernist, hard and irrepensible. Acute and shrill but persuasive voice, capable of motivating others, and of occupying space.

(Piacenza) Reportage photographer, frequent traveler and motorcyclist, neapolitan, devoted to the countryside life and seasonal worker in Amazon's warehouses to palliate to the economic crisis which rages in his professional sector. A lot of humour, generous and generous words, warmth and simplicity.

(Milano) Ex-art curator, now apprentice gardener, silent animator of the underground cultural life of Milan for twenty years. Elegant, subtle and receptive to the simplest form of radicalism in the art, facilitator of projects, solitary.

(Bologna) Musical teenager, clarinetist, curious, open and relaxed, a large voice.

(Reggio Emilia) A mature, responsible and curious teenager, Emilian with an American and distant father, a light laugh, an intelligent simplicity, passionate about the Scout community.

### 2) Composition (spring / summer / fall 2020)

In Alessandro Bosetti's studio in Marseille. Transcription, recomposition, explosion, germination of recorded materials.

From documentary materials and recorded conversations. Details, minimal inflections, turns of phrases, cracks in the voice get magnified and become elements from which sound construction starts..

Learning by heart fragments, which are fixed in memory as a minimal cosmogony. Development of a double score, for vocal ensemble and for a radiophonic montage from the same starting materials.

Handling over a reference score in early spring 2020.

### 3) Rehearsal residencies (15 days in total: 5 days in Stuttgart with the Neue Vocalsolisten - 5 days at the gmem in Marseille for the electroacoustic part - 5 days at the gmem in Marseille with the Neue Vocalsolisten before the premiere at the gmem festival in May 2021).

Grouped in two work modules with entire crew, a few months apart.

The first module is intended as a creation residence where different possibilities are tested and processed and where it is still possible to bring out new ideas.

The second module are straight ahead rehearsals before the premiere.



#### 4) Première.

Festival Les Musiques, Marseille May 15, 2021.

#### 5) Tours and booking 2021/2022

Nouveau Theatre de Montreuil, Festival Mesure par Mesure 2021  
La Soufflerie, Rézé.  
Musik der Jahrhunderte, Stuttgart.

