

Kroese : *The sound installation Sphericals is an innovative carrier of electronic sound. How did the idea of making this installation evolve?*

Killian: As you know I have made and shown several site-specific sound installations since 1995. I was using multiple speaker set ups to make use of the total space and to be able to make sound movements. The problem that kept popping up was that the installations were only shown once and often not for a long time, compared to the huge amount of time I invested in making them. With Sphericals and a few other installations I am working on I try to tackle the problem. These new installations are very flexible because they are modular and can easily be adjusted to different spaces. By making them this way it becomes easier to show them in a variety of spaces.

Kroese: *It looks beautiful, a collection of black spheres that hang at different heights in space. Has the visual aspect played a role in making the installation?*

Killian: Absolutely. I made black spherical speakers because of the graphic quality they have. I didn't like the use of existing speakers either because they bring a domestic flavor with them that I want to avoid. The speakers that have a nice design are very expensive so I decided to make them myself. The idea is that the installation takes over the place, occupies it, so the autonomous qualities of the installation become clear. I also hope that the visual aspect helps one to understand how the installation works.

Kroese: *Can you tell something about the way the speakers are placed in the space?*

Killian: To make the distance between every cable the same, the speakers are hung in a grid of equilateral triangles that don't accommodate to the square properties of most spaces. This time the speakers are hung at seven different levels. In spaces with a lower ceiling this can be adjusted to three different levels. Only with three and seven levels is it possible to expand the installation into all directions in a well-balanced way.

Kroese: Is the making of a sound field a complicated process?

Killian: Above all, it takes a lot of time. For this sound field I first designed sounds on a modular synthesizer. The next step is recording these sounds and letting them 'move' through the installation. I use for this, a sort of routing system that is executed by fade ins and fade outs on every channel. The fade ins and outs I do by hand so I can control how they sound in my test set. In the end I make loops (a repeating piece of sound) of the different sounds with different lengths. Because I let the loops walk out of phase the sound field never sounds the same. You could call it a not fixated sound collage.

Kroese: *There are no instrumentalists. How do you imagine the listening experience of the public? Has it something in common with a classic concert?*

Killian: No, I want it to be more like an exhibition or as an environment in which the public can choose how long it wants to enjoy it. Because the sound fields don't have a specific duration this is not a problem. The public can move through the installation or sit a certain time on the chairs available. In principle the sound fields don't have a fixed duration, but because the hard disk of the multi channel recorder can only record maximum of 8 hours I use that duration. Just enough for one exhibition day!

Kroese: *Are you trying with this sound field to build up a narrative structure or to create a certain suspense, or do other factors play a role?*

Killian: I don't try to build up a narrative structure, I am more interested in creating an environment. But I make sure there is a certain tension or suspense in the sound field. I cannot compose that tension

in a traditional way because I work with loops that walk out of phase, but I can change the density of sound and silence in the loops in such way they interact better. I also take care how certain sounds can move best in the sound field, depending on their character.

Kroese: *Did you have a certain idea of space when making the sound fields? I am thinking about the physical space and its characteristics like reflection and reverb. Or a virtual space in which space parameters suddenly or slowly can change.*

Killian: The idea of space when making Sphericals is not that of a virtual space but that of a physical space. I use a bit of reverb to enlarge the space. You could call that virtual space because it is not produced by the space itself. Sound always moves in an acoustic space but the movements in the sound field have a more descriptive quality, by which scale and distance are expressed differently as the static acoustic experience of a lot of concert music. I am looking for a dynamic approach towards space and I hope to activate visitors to walk through the installation.

Kroese: *For the record: the installation is called 'Sphericals' and you made spatial sound fields for it that not carry this name?*

Killian: That is right, for 'Sphericals' I made a sound field that you can hear now. For another installation, 'Acousticals' I also made a sound field that has a totally different character.

Kroese: *If you could choose a space for 'Sphericals' where would you place it?*

Killian: I wouldn't know immediately. The intention is to place it in a lot of different spaces. I would prefer spaces with a strong ceiling and white walls that make a nice contrast with the black spherical speakers.

Kroese: *How do you picture the use of 'Sphericals' in the future? Are you planning more sound fields for it?*

Killian: I hope to show 'Sphericals' in a lot of different spaces. I am looking forward to make more sound fields for it now that I have finally finished the installation.

Kroese: *Is it conceivable that other composers/ sound artists could make pieces for Sphericals?*

Killian: Of course! I am dreaming about a library of sound fields. That would make it possible to play every day another sound field during an exhibition. Sphericals would then also become a platform for other artists. First I want to check the system myself a few times to fine tune it.

Kroese: *Thank you for this interview, and we hope to hear a lot of sound fields in the future.*

