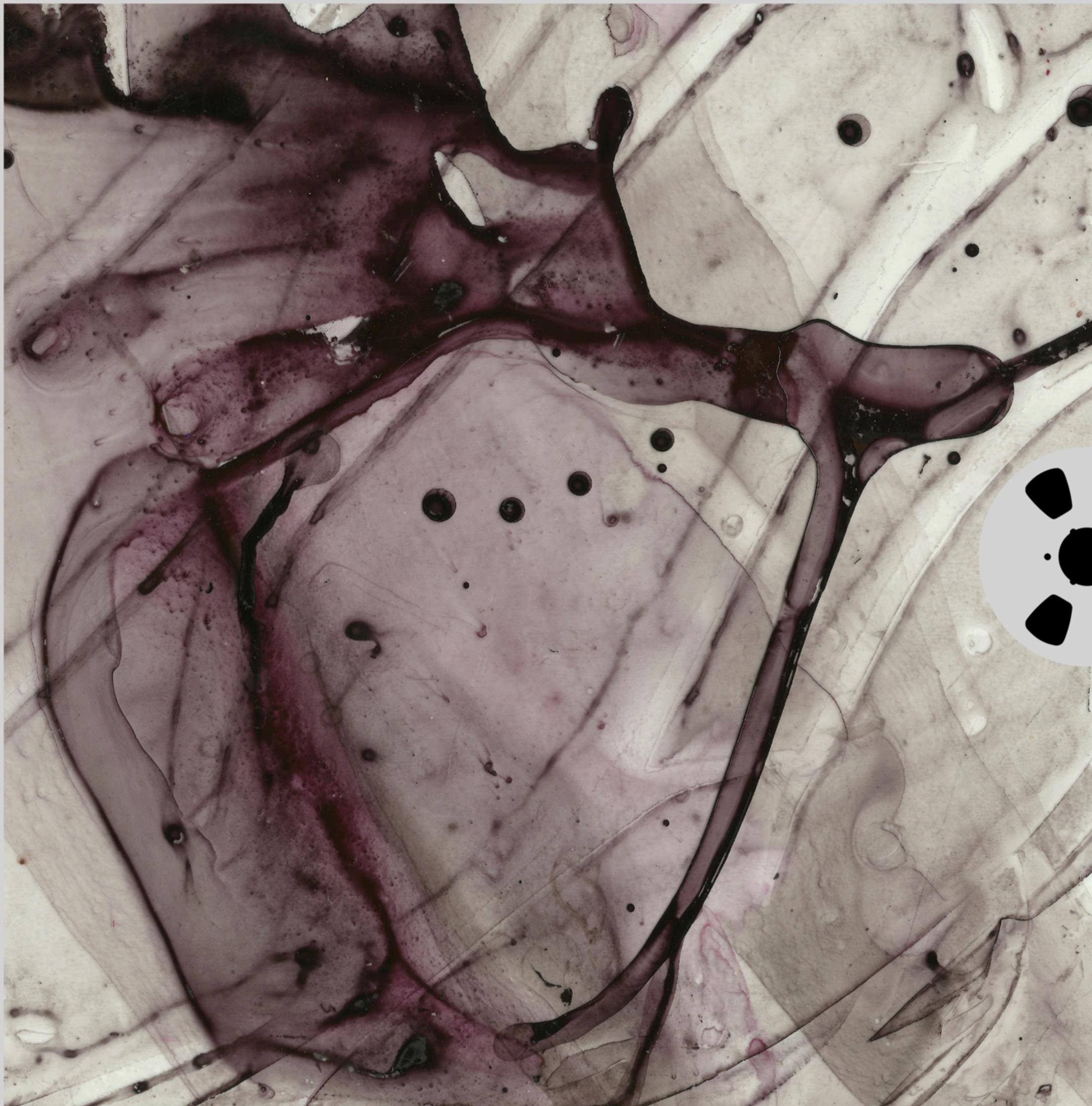


ÁKOS NAGY



HUNNIA RECORDS

LINEAMENTS I.



Preface

I listen to the misty world of the record in an eddying sequence: a selection of pieces by my friend Ákos Nagy, a lunch eater, protester, cable to cable plugger, runner of many kilometers on city asphalt, one head higher than me and even talks twice as much as I do.

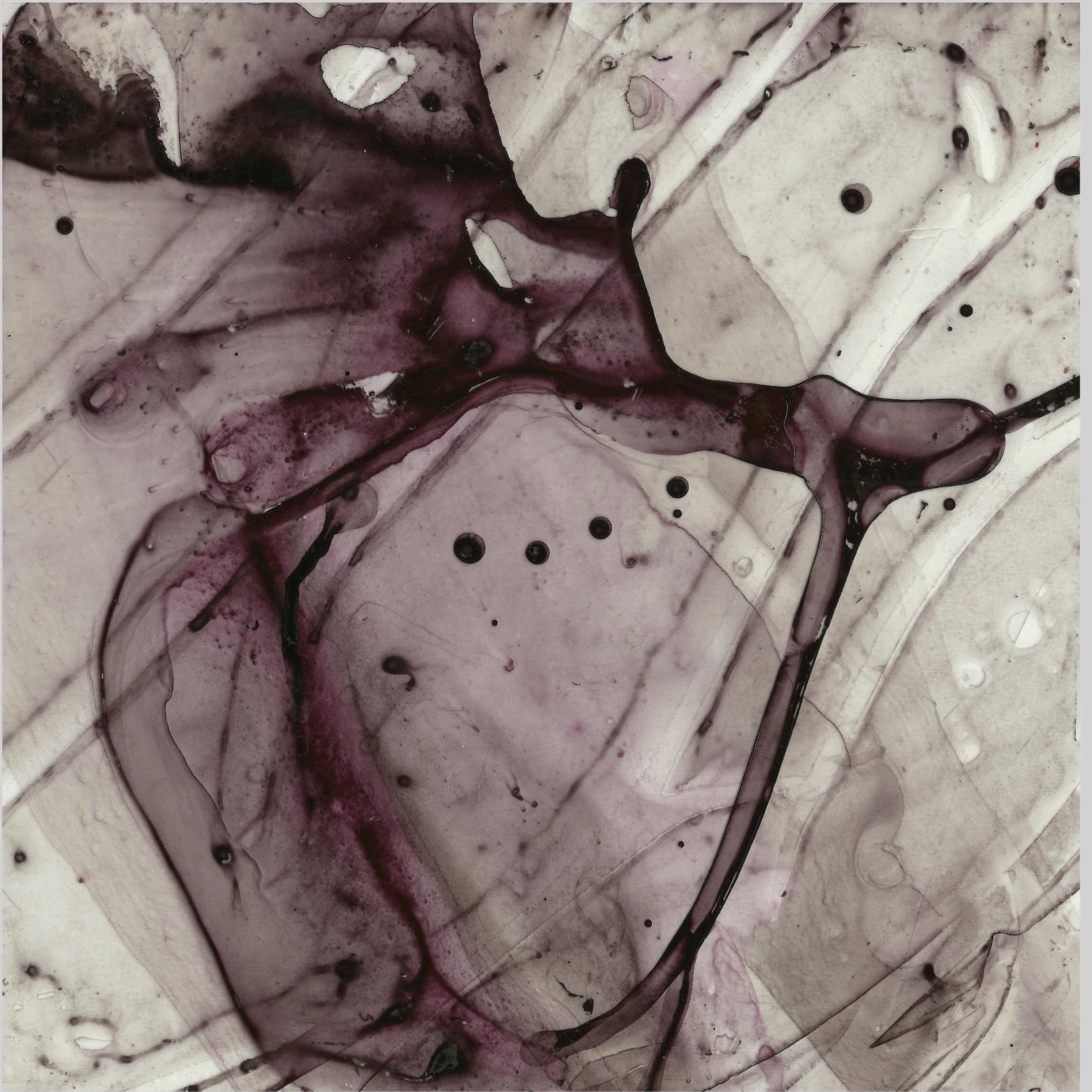
Foggy noise, noisy silence, quiet fog. New and newer forms are constantly emerging from the mist: I have no idea whether they exist or just visions. The record seems as if it would be a single piece - are there really any separate tracks? Perhaps the figure of Rothko and Michaux is recognizable, are they really there? - but they were called by their names. Hurdy gurdy, Viola da Gamba, Serpent - are they really present, or do we just imagine them? Have such instruments ever existed at all? Flute? Is there anything like that?

I've heard these pieces before, not even once, in fact, I've played along some of them at once without knowing that a piece is what's behind the improvisation. But are these pieces? I do not remember. Where are the boundaries? Are there any? Or do we just imagine? Hugely magnified granular synthesis: everything fades in from somewhere and fades out somehow. Like the Saints in the Medieval Clock Tower of Prague, out of the shadows and back into the shadows: but what are they doing in the back from which they vaguely appear? And do they really come every hour? They may not even come anymore.

Behind the fog, there may be a city, if there is: buildings are emerging, many floors. Constantly downward gravitating fifths - cannot see the depths where they lead: is there possibly a subway? Could be the evening fog, maybe morning. Maybe on a suburban meadow, maybe on a trafficless highway, maybe over the water of the Danube. The city may be ruined, maybe anew. Maybe it's still inhabited, maybe they have already moved from there.

János Bali

Liszt Ferenc Prize recorder player, conductor, composer, mathematician, teacher



Hommage á Rothko

Mark Rothko's emotionally disturbing paintings - coming from any of his periods - radiate energy and strength that is difficult to explain and troublesome to algorithmise. For many, they convey the majestic tragedy of existence, of life, for me they apt to express vitality - although I know this term needs to be explained further in Rothko's case. I am not thinking of the vitality of youth, nor of the vitality of a plant that leaps from a tiny seed into a stalk, but rather of the unexpected greening of a matushal-aged olive tree that has been withered for years. I mean the "just-because" vitality. Perhaps because of the rougher surface of his paintings, the "scratched" presence of the material, the viewer suspects that there is something else under the paint. Something that wants to break out, protrude. Something that wishes for light. There are two forces tensioning against each other here, the armour of the paint surface and that certain force lurking underneath. And Rothko's images convert this tension into energy with maximum efficiency. *Hommage á Rothko* puts the sounds of instruments that are still ordinary in the historical distance and are now more of a museum attraction in a new context. A microscopic sample of sound analysis would certainly make visible the physical properties of these sounds, the formulas rippling on the surface of the envelopes, the needle-like outgrowths, the immaterial vibration that seems algorithmic. Mere sensual impressions most often evoke metonymies of flavour, spice, citrus scents, something that is so easy to associate with the notion of vitality. The versions of *Hommage á Rothko* are fast-paced compositions of the album, a vivace movement each.

In dem Nebel

All music creates a ritual situation. Yes, all music. It's not a question of aesthetics, neither has anything to do with taste or special musical knowledge. But what happens if this ritual situation does not occur by the first gesture of a piece of music? At such times, we turn tail and get out of the time capsule offered by that particular music. We will never know what kind of rite would have taken place in the abandoned few seconds, minutes or hours. We miss out on a lot of music in our lives, as not everything can be listened to. But there are still countless pieces that we encounter and abandon for some reason or another. We easily give it up because they don't make us feel that we are lead into a rite.

In dem Nebel begins with the eternal call sign, gesture, exclamation of all rites. Then, after a meaningful, rhetorical pause, draws a line in the air of inextricably tangled stories, so characteristic of endless tales. We arrived. We are here and we will remain here. We'll be curious about such a story right away, we don't want to dodge it. We don't even know when it will end, but at every moment we feel where we are. It's musical fabric is never too complicated, with only three or four layers projected onto each other at a time. We are amazed again and again by the sounds coming from a distance, from nowhere, that they were already present when we had not yet perceived them, and we can hear them still after they are no longer physically present.

Then there are musical objects that suddenly pop up in front of us, with a sharper light and a rougher edge, longer or shorter motifs that are not immediately scary, they turn out only afterwards, that they could have even been sources of trouble. They also endanger the musical form itself, as they always present themselves as candidates for a serious role. Fog is a broad metaphor, but have we ever considered that in a really dense fog, where only a fraction of external information reaches our senses, where there is only the illusion that perception sharpens, we somehow always avoid a fatal collision. With the passing of the fog, our faith may be strengthened, our faith may be born, and of course it well may be, that nothing worth mentioning happens in the matter of faith. Either way, we usually remember it.

Of course, the recalled images are always sharper, always clearer, and the feeling of "overcoming it" aesthetizes the experience. In dem Nebel is actually two movements, with a "normal" break. The altered timbre, texture, and tempo character of the latter, which is difficult to define but still perceptible, indicating that the two parts are separated by worlds. But leastways, the time interval is much an order of magnitude longer than a single batch of breath, just as thousands of years can shrink into a single moment of rites.

Par la voie des rythmes - La Déploration sur la mort d'Henri Michaux

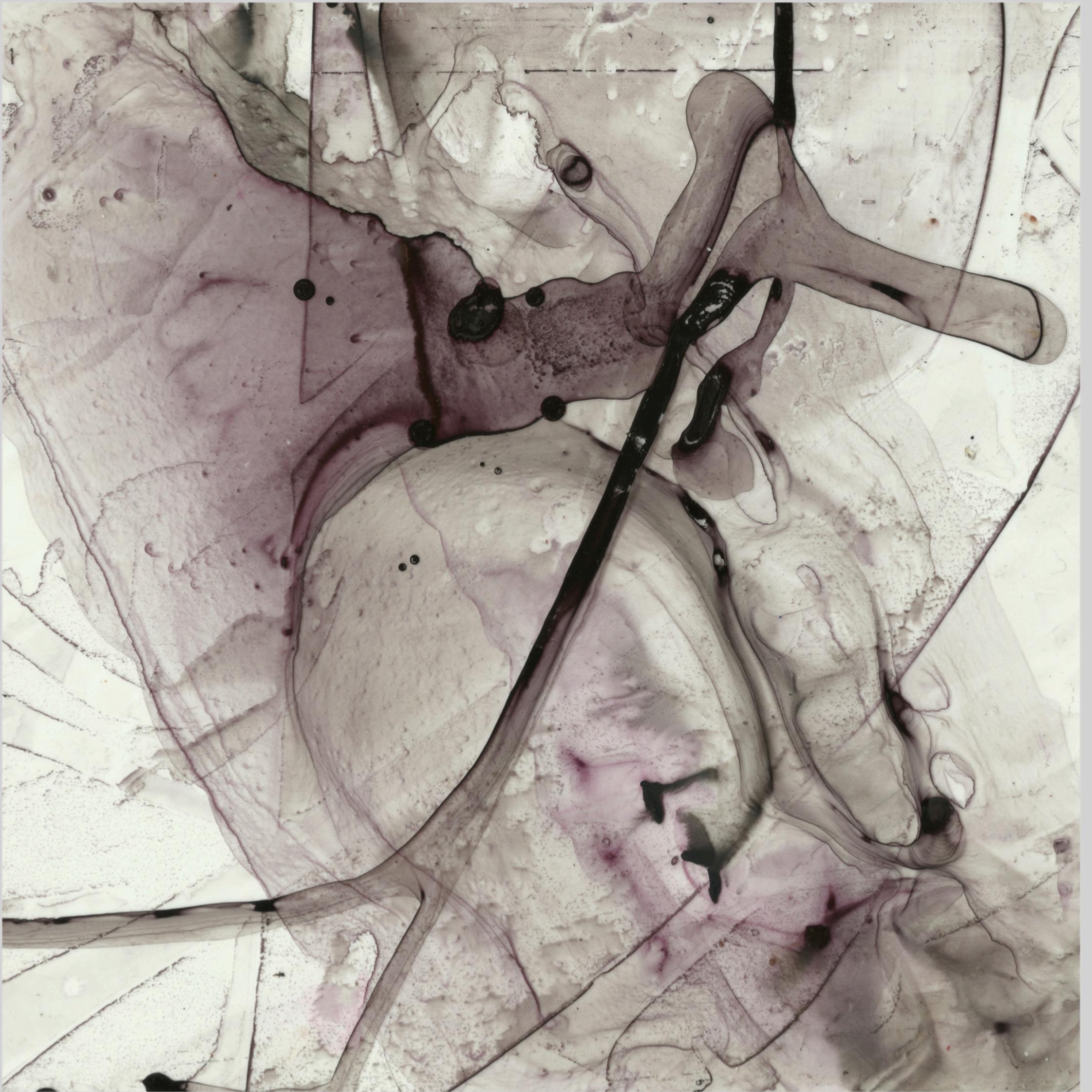
Monumentality is a less evident feeling for the musical experience, yet a building, a sculpture, a novel, or a poem can create it merely through its quantitative parameters. There's something big in front of me, I realise that it takes a long time to accommodate it, because it's long because it's diverse because it's full of movement. But being monumental in itself has no aesthetic benefit. A huge building is very ugly, a gigantic statue is almost suspicious, a long stream of novels can be endlessly withering. At the same time, encountering monumental music, is almost always accompanied by an experience of fascination, it has a very aesthetic effect - however its nature is elusive.

It is pretty much known what the underlying principle of the Schönberg, Webern short piece is. In his welcome letter to Busoni, Schönberg advocates conciseness, "two voices, that's all: not to build, but to express!" - he grants the command. "Aside with endless music weighing twenty-four pounds, towers built and designed, rocks and other gigantic crap." A long piece however can realise its length and at the same time, its monumentality in many ways. It could be a series of variations strung on the same line of thought, like Bach's *Goldberg* or Beethoven's *Diabelli*. It can be as kaleidoscopic as Schubert's *Winter Journey* or as purely grandiose as a single movement in one of Bruckner's symphonies. It also doesn't matter what timbre voices fill the protracted time, maybe a single harpsichord or a mammoth band; and who hasn't already felt the physical weight beyond the spiritual while listening to Bartók's - and of course Bach's - sonata for solo violin? In the special experiment of *Par la voie des rythmes*, a fusion of a short piece from Schönberg and a long piece that can take many forms is realized. The piece has the effect of an endless garland of two-component elements (such as a coloured spot of sound next to another), but it is not kept in movement by repetition but by variation. And the movement is on a Bruckner like scale, instead of details, the larger-cycles capture the listener's attention here as well.

This music is not progressing, it is rather marching. Just as we admire the almost trigonometric curves in the distance instead of the billions of square centimeters of the undulating water surface, so *Par la voie des rythmes* also offers, at least for the first hearing, a generous reception of music. Fortunately, musical reception can take place on many channels, and there are compositions that, allow the selective attention reserved for a second audition to be sharpened, this time to detect trifles per square centimetre.

Par la voie des rythmes, as a peculiar experiment is implicitly, such a composition, and in its tiny corners, paying tribute to the spirit of Henri Michaux, we can discover many strangeness in the strictest sense of the word.

Szabolcs Molnár
musiccographer, music critic, teacher



Hommage á Rothko **electroacoustic and Geneamus Ensemble version**

I've been searching for a long time how I could totally merge the spectrums of the acoustic instruments with the spectrums of electronic instruments. I would like to do some „Mission Impossible“ thing as I am trying to handle an acoustic medium as it would be an electronic one and vice versa.

Robert Mandel found me with the idea that he and Zsuzsa Aba-Nagy wanted to widen their own-founded Geneamus Ensemble named formation which used historical instruments from Vienne and Budapest and electronic instruments together.

As I think to myself as a par excellence electronic composer because I am trying to make electronic soundings in acoustic medium I really liked the idea of mixing the electronic music with the olden instruments which are much more richer in intonation and have more colours than modern instruments.

I have been experimentalising a kind of multitimbral way of composing where the melodies are accompanied by shade voices. In this case I mean the melody as a vectorial direction and I mean the same for the tonal melody but maybe while listening to the tonal melody the listener can feel an arrival or disappointment feeling (unresolved, surprise-cadence, Neapolitan destination tone, minor edge VI, alterations, et cetera). These shade voices are the main reasons for making the unisono voices multitimbral. The multitimbrality is when there are more tones at the same time which can turn into each other back and forth. At this time the spectrum is broadened or narrowed by harmonics or inharmonics so the fluctuation is continuous.

This can be easily put with my former multilayer way of composing together, where I could get complex sound density because of the several hundreds of layers which I wanted to control afterwards. We could call it vectorial multitimbral synthesis where the oscillators and the acoustic instruments morph each other's tone as a frequency or phase synthesis.

Hommage á Rothko

Geneamus Ensemble version

Zsuzsanna Aba Nagy – harp

Roland Szentpáli – serpent

Zsolt Szabó – viola da gamba

Róbert Mandel – hurdy-gurdy

Ákos Nagy – electronics

music by **Ákos Nagy** [2015]

recording engineer: **Mihály Kádár**

mixing & mastering engineer: **Mihály Kádár, Ákos Nagy**

re-acoustic engineer: **Gábor Halász**

Hommage á Rothko

electroacoustic version

Ákos Nagy – electronics

music by **Ákos Nagy** [2014]

mixing & mastering engineer: **Ákos Nagy**

re-acoustic engineer : **Gábor Halász**

In dem Nebel

My greatest music experience in 2016 was when I did my usual 10 km's running in the evening in Rijeka and I heard an amazing polyphonic honking fog horn choir.

Their major-third had a faintly flashing turquoise greenish-purple colour and vertiginous pallor. Of course they didn't try to follow any temperation (for example: just intonation), I was totally impressed even though. So much that when we arrived home to Budapest with my family I immediately started to rewrite my half done piece, In dem Nebel from the beginning and I enhanced its originally 8 minutes length to double.

The fog horn here had a trumpet-horn-trombone choir sounding which is moving in a synthetic system and ends up in a kind of tonal blur. I wrote the "fog horn" melody with Püthagoras fifth emphasizing the comma. In this case the four fifth which are build on one another results a lower major third. The fifth sound in the range (C-G-D-A-E) will always be higher than the perfect major third which are built on the first tone. I made the melody using these so called synthonic comma.

In dem Nebel

Ákos Nagy – percussions, electronics

music by **Ákos Nagy** [2017]

mixing engineer: **Sándor Árok**

mastering engineer: **Tamás Sellyei**

re-acoustic engineer: **Gábor Halász**

Par la voie des rythmes

La Déploration sur la mort d'Henri Michaux

The piece is build up from more different audio interfaces which are based on Henri Michaux Par la voie des rythmes titled book on the one hand where the automatic writing in becoming to calligraphic art and then to very different meaning content. In case of Michaux these can always be transformed to his self-made ABC set (see H. Michaux: Alphabets/Arbres des tropiques/ Mouvements book) so in this way the drawing can become writing and writing can become drawing. I wanted to make this very interesting and only Michaux-characteristic articulation to the main organizing principle of my music.

On the other hand I wanted to emphasize the interoperability between different cultures which I was interested in as well as Michaux in his H. Michaux Idéogrammes en Chine, Ecoudar titled book – published at Bozóthegyí book publisher. So you can find Japanese, Korean and many other South East-Asian music cultures as well as European and South-American Latin traditions. It was very important for me to reflect this as a locale colorit or dialect.

If I want to word this precisely without any genre, stylistic and aesthetic notion then I would say that are the sounding-time is becoming audible. The excessively fluid and amorphous articulation and motion of this sounding-time creates the music itself.

Ákos Nagy
composer

Par la voie des rythmes

La Déploration sur la mort d'Henri Michaux

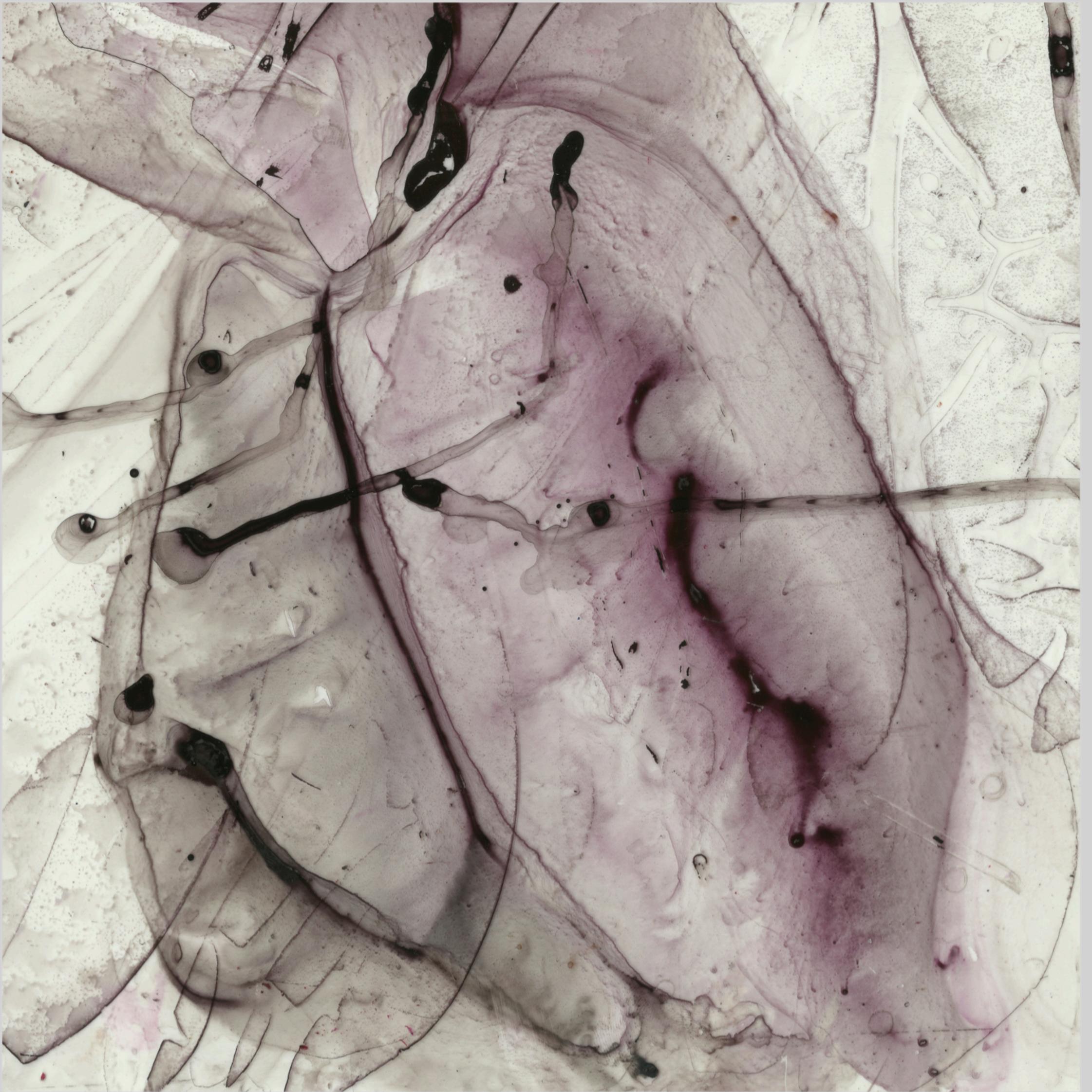
Ákos Nagy – percussions, electronics

István Rimóczi – percussions, objects

music by **Ákos Nagy** [2018]

mixing & mastering engineer: **Sándor Árok**

re-acoustic engineer: **Gábor Halász**



Track list

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 01. Hommage á Rothko (Geneamus Ensemble version) | 07:50 |
| 02. In dem Nebel | 20:20 |
| 03. Par la voie des rythmes – La Déploration sur la Mort d'Henri Michaux | 28:40 |
| 04. Hommage á Rothko (electroacoustic version) | 06:42 |

Re Acoustica

The method of Re-Amping contemporary classical music.

Some of you may be familiar with the term Re-Amping... for those that are not, it is a technique used in music that has electric guitars in it. It means that when recording an electric guitar, both the clean and the amped version of the signal is being recorded at the same time done by a D.I. box. We can later use the clean guitar recording and drive an amp with it, change some of the parameters to get the right sound we want and record it again as we wish.

When the idea to make Akos's album for a DSD release came up, we were facing a problem. Most of his material for volume 1 have been recorded and mixed in PCM format. Recording it again in DSD was nearly impossible as some of his arrangements consisted of over 200 separate tracks combining both acoustic instruments pushed to their limits and many layers of synths and effects. So we really had to think how to transfer all of that into DSD form without doing a simple PCM to DSD conversion, which would completely defeat the purpose. The idea was that we somehow make his music acoustic again and record it that way, and this is when the idea of Re-Amping was considered. Re-amping through guitar amps would make no sense in this case as it would completely ruin the source material and turn it into a distorted mess. So instead of using guitar amps we set out to find a pair of speakers that would not colour the signal passing through, have a wide listening angle, works well with fast transients and have a flat frequency spectrum. We then would set up these speakers in the studio, place microphones in front of them and record Akos's material through them in DSD format.

Luckily around the same time we were thinking of this process I went to an event where d&b audiotechnik speakers were used and I was blown away by their transparency and accuracy. The German company d&b audiotechnik was founded in a garage by Jürgen Daubert and Rolf Belz. 1985 - The first complete product line hit the market in 1985 and today they are industry leading in producing PA systems. The Hungarian distributor INTERTON Kft was kind enough to make a demo for us. It was a no brainer that the E series speaker line would be an ideal candidate for the job we needed it for.

As with something we never done before, it took quite some experimentation, we had to find an ideal speaker placement for the best possible stereo field recreation, avoid phase cancellation and microphone bleed. On top we wanted to take advantage of the acoustics in our studio, play around with mic placement too. Not only we had to think about speakers, but microphone and preamp choices seemed equally important. We have used Dpa 4007 Dpa 4041 and Neumann U47 FET in a close proximity about 50cm away from the speakers. AEA stereo ribbon mic placed about 3m away, to capture room sound. Then last but not least a pair of Neumann U87 placed very high up in our neighbouring stone room with doors opened. This provided us with a natural reverb that we could blend in with the close microphones in post production.

Doing the first take of the whole arrangement/mix through this system we were very surprised how detailed and dynamic the recording was and we then saw that this process could work. As accurate as it was however some of the original liveliness got lost in translation, of course that could be expected. Akos's music is all about the little details of space that surrounds each voice. He is creating a world of his own where each note has a story, things equally seem familiar and at the same time completely alien. It was very important to keep these nuances and even try to highlight them. Adjustments from time to time were being made how much we were pushing the preamps to increase harmonics. We had to change and adjust some mixing decisions made before hand. It also seemed logical to have some sort of separation within elements, leaving room for fine tuning in the mixing stage. Therefore we grouped instruments together and did a separate pass for each group. This way we had 6-7 takes of each piece. Having all those different microphones and preamps meant that at the mixing stage, EQ-ing could be done mostly by adjusting the balance of each mic since they all sound a bit different. The mixing was mostly about automating volumes for each individual mic and instrument group as a whole, enhance or balance out the dynamics and tone. Our final step before delivery was a subtle mastering where we applied a mild glue compression with the SSL G Series Bus compressor and a tiny amount of EQ to introduce some "air" to the top end.

We wish you all a happy and deep listening experience.

Ákos Nagy
Gábor Halász



Ákos Nagy

Lineaments I.

Recorded at the **Supersize Recording Studio**, Hungary **2020**

Balance and recording, mastering engineer: **Gábor Halász**

Mastering engineer: **Tom Caulfield**

Special thanks to **Sándor Árok**

Recorded audio formats: **Native DSD 256** (Piramix, Merging Hapi)

Cover art: **Ákos Nagy & Levente Hajdú**

Photos: **Andor Polgár 2018**, Teyler Museum, Haarlem

Producer: **Róbert Zoltán Hunka**

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