Vapore - Reflection 1.

SPEAKERS
Ivar Grydeland, Ingar Zach

Ingar Zach 00:06
Yes, here is the orchestral bass drum in action. It is left over from previous material from a long piece that I had recorded. And here a new material begins to seep in. It's a kantele sample that I'm playing from a drum machine app called Patterning, that I've programmed into a sort of…, I wouldn't call it a loop. It sounds a bit loopy, but there is a small "tweak" in each voice in the kantele app, and I introduce note by note now as you can hear.

Ingar Zach 01:00
And this kantele sound then, it is heard from the timpani. It is the sound of the timpani you hear, which resonates with the kantele sound via a transducer (a vibrating speaker).

Ingar Zach 01:22
Yes, there it is. It's the same timpani that's heard there, vibrating with another app called Ribbons which is a synth that I can play tactilely with the iPad. And then you hear what vibrates on top of the timpani. It's a triangle, which causes it to dissonate. A kind of twisted sound.

Ingar Zach 01:58
I have always, for a long time, wanted to play melodically on my percussion. So, playing melodies and glissandi. And now I've finally got the opportunity to do that ... (laughter), with the app called Ribbons. There is a scale with four, five octaves that enables you to work and play glissandi tactilely.

Ingar Zach 02:30
And now you hear that the kantele repetition is playing by itself. Both the kantele and the glissando melody there resonate from the timpani. It is the timpani that plays, while the low frequency stuff is coming from the Gran Cassa (the bass drum).

Ivar Grydeland 02:55
So here the Gran Cassa and the timpani are, in a way, speakers. They become the membrane, in a way. It resonates in the body of the drum and the timpani.

Ingar Zach 03:09
It vibrates in the membrane and it resonates in the body of the instruments, and of course in the room. You mustn't forget that. There is a very important element here that influence a lot on how I play and how I actually distribute the different tones and the different actions. How long they last are due to how much space they take up in the room as well.

Ingar Zach 03:42
And here I work a lot with small microtonal twists with the glissando notes, to bring out the dissonant notes in the vibration in the triangle on top of the skin.

Ingar Zach 04:11
This is material that I have worked with over time in my studio. And there, there is hardly any reverberation. It is completely dry. So it is something completely different here...all these tones, they linger in the room, for quite a while.

Ingar Zach 04:30
The real dissonant stuff comes a little later in the song, where actually the triangle… I don't quite know what's going on. There are other tones that you hear here, for example. It is a result of the vibration. The triangle's own frequency is perhaps in interaction with the vibration on the skin and the note that I play.

Ivar Grydeland 05:00
Mmm, are there things like that that you are looking for?... When you worked with the pitch there for example. Is it that kind of thing, that kind of interference that you are looking for?

Ingar Zach 05:10
Yes, when it comes, when it sort of unfolds, I like to work with those things spontaneously. So that ... I've worked with certain melodic phrases beforehand, but then in the room, how you've tuned the timpani, is maybe a little different from what you did in the studio, which makes it vibrate in another way. And the position of the triangle, and the skin also determines the kind of outcome that comes out sonically.

Ingar Zach 05:48
There are very small nuances too. Here you also hear ... there are little rhythmic patterns that I just do with my fingers on the drumskin. It's a note that sings, and I just make small rhythmic movements and just by doing, it has a kind of rhythmic effect. So, there are incredibly small variables at play.

Ingar Zach 06:13
And now I pulled out the bass frequency there. Now only the timpani play.

Ivar Grydeland 06:29
That kantele. It sounded to me like it changes a bit in character too?

Ingar Zach 06:34
Yes, it changes its character a bit now because it also vibrates from the same drumskin, right? It is affected by the melody I play, in addition to the fact that the bass frequency is gone now, which means that the sound ... everything influence each other. So when it's gone you get other types of resonances. So the kantele, it is completely distorted.

Ingar Zach 07:05
And then you hear here, there are some frequencies that produce a kind of pulse, at which I rest a bit. I look for these pulses and now I play with two hands on the iPad, I think. One holds a note and then I play a melody with the other.

Ingar Zach 07:40
There, for example, the kantele app takes on a completely different character.

Ingar Zach 07:51
This is acoustic. In other words, the signal that I send from the iPad, i.e. is electronic. But the sound that comes out, is acoustic. There is an acoustic manipulation that takes place.

Ivar Grydeland 08:07:
mmmm.

Ingar Zach 08:09
So there is no electronics involved other than the sound that is sent in. When it is reinforced on the skin and with the preparations I have, acoustic interference simply occurs.

Ivar Grydeland 06:23
mmmm

Ingar Zach 08:26
And there, it is the first time I actually have a bell that I play that has nothing to do with electronic sound. Only two strokes.

Ingar Zach 08:43
Here it goes towards the end, and then only thing that runs is the kantele app, which goes through the whole piece.

That's it.

Ingar Zach 00:06
Hi, Jim. So, Jim Denley is with me here, all the way from Sydney, Australia, listening to the first track on my second album. And it's recorded in an anechoic chamber. And it was actually your fault that I did this recording. It was you who put me up to this idea.

Jim Denley 00:29
I am sorry about that Ingar.

Ingar Zach 00:30
No, it's not sorry at all, because you don't have to be sorry. This was actually a very good idea as part of maybe just to value this recording and the sounds that I make with the transducers in another space, then the first recording I did, which was in the reverberant space in the Mausoleum in Oslo. So, what you hear now, it's actually it's an app called patterning a drum machine is like a circular drum machine app which has eight voices. And I program this with a tank drum sample. And what you hear is the acoustic resonation of the sound of the app, vibrating with the transducer on the head of the drum. And there's also a kind of a sliding melody here, which I also play tactilely with my hand on the iPad. This is kind of, well, it's a sine wave actually, which I can manipulate with my fingers to do glissandos and melodies. And I do this at the same time as the loop of the patterning drum machine is vibrating on the drum. So, there are several signals entering in the same transducer. And now also, there's a kind of a preparation. I put some kind of chain on the skin as well. You can hear it vibrating. I am adding now different voices in this drum machine app. So, you can hear different voices entering in the in this..., I wouldn't call it a loop actually. Because these eight voices they are of different lengths. So, they're not repeating themselves in the same way each time every voice is repeating. So, it's kind of more like a pattern that is repeating with variation, more than that it's like a static loop.

Jim Denley 02:58
I mean it doesn't come across, effectively as a loop. There's too much variation, and change. And I can't sort of measure in my head, any sort of loopish characteristics.

Ingar Zach 03:18
The one thing is maybe the low-end pattern, which is kind of repeating, but then again, it's also tilted in a way so the gaps between are not equal every time. Because I don't really like to work with static loops, I need some kind of tilt or a variation in it, to be able to make it more alive in a way, that I can play with it, without referring to some kind of static object.

Jim Denley 03:48
I mean, it effectively works for me as a groove. By it's a groovy, I mean, especially now that the that sort of more

rhythmic, or more regular sort of parsing is coming in. But it's not as sort of a genre group. Like I can't sort of go oh, that's a reggae or, you know, like, you know, some sort of associated with a genre.

Ingar Zach 04:18
Yeah, but also this kind of groove thing it actually stems from a lot of my previous work with the group called Huntsville also with Ivar Grydeland and Tonny Kluften, and I've been working with these kind of non-repetitive grooves and these patterns more like pulses then actually grooves because later on in this long 20 minutes tune you also hear that I also add like brushes to it an d I try to mix with the pattern that is going on there and also these small events that I put are also acoustic instruments intervening in the loop, right. So, it's kind of trying to make the organic meltdown of what's coming in electronically, and what I do propose acoustically. Since everything is resonating acoustically of this, I mean, it's not electronic, I don't feel it's an electronic sound. As soon as all these materials vibrates with the skin, it becomes acoustic for me. It's about vibration, basically, hopefully, you can hear it in the beginning. It's rattling in the in the timpani itself, right, when I actually make the transducer really work. I'm pushing it. I'm pushing the possibilities for the transducer to work, and you can also hear the transducer flutter on the skin. My goal is to have this acoustic elaboration of sound even though I have inspirations from electronic music, of course.
I really like the fact that it's the sound of the drum itself, you hear it rattling here, right. And also, when I add this small glissando down in the low end, and you hear the natural cow skin here, which is vibrating. It's so rewarding to be so close to this to the production of sound and especially this instrument and I and I feel that with the transducers I can also orchestrate and have this connection with the vibration that I've never had before. I mean I've tried before with other objects and also like also other kinds of speakers, not transducers with vibration but, and it's not the same because it leaves my hands occupied right. So now with the transducer connected to the skin, I can actually manipulate with my hands and also here in this recording I also hear my voice as well entering in the layers of sound of the frequencies. It's quite ambiguous if it's the voice or not because it's also entering in the transducer right and the sound of the voice will get manipulated by the preparations or the chains or the triangles that are on the skins. So, it's kind of a way to just implementing all the facets of my body and also the connection with the skin, with the membrane that's vibrating.

Jim Denley 08:43
Yeah, I mean, I can't help but think this through Merleau-Ponty's thinking about embodiment. And in the phenomenology of perception. Yeah, he had this classic stuff, where he talks about the blind man's cane. And so, the cane becomes an extension of the blind man's body. And so, he also in the latter, I can't remember the text, but he talks about that technology can be kind of an embodied organ. So, there's the technology of the drum skin, the transducer, the apps, all become this sort of extension of you into the skin, which is also you. So, there's sort of dividing line between Ingar and the system. The drumming system of skins, your skin, that skin, yeah, the cow skin, the transducers, the electronics. So, it seems to me that this complex..., could you call it a feedback system? Between all these things? It's not using feedback in a Hendrix sort of way. But it's a sort of a feedback between your body, your hands on the skin, the skin. Yeah. And so, I think it is a sort of a feedback system.

Ingar Zach 10:25
Yeah, it's a kind of a different feedback system, I would say, because I chose not to use this, because transducers are also, I mean, you can work with transducer with feedback as well. And I get these from many of my colleagues saying, "Hey, you're working with transducers, you're going to use feedback, no"? "Mm, not really in the way that you that you're suggesting." Because what I'm really interested in is the actual contact with the transducer, not that it can generate feedback, because I tried this with the voice with the microphone, for example. It depends on what kind of microphone you have, like a sensitive microphone, you will have lots of work actually trying to control the signal in and being close to the drum, you create feedback straight away. And that wasn't really attractive to me to work with that sound because I didn't have any control with it, I wanted to merge like entered from deep inside and mix with the sounds in the transducers together with all kinds of signals, right. So, this I know the possibility of doing that with the transducers, but I chose not to because this was taking me somewhere else where I totally lost control and I somehow wanted to be able to have the possibility to navigate really well with all the parameters that I sent through the transducer. But you were speaking about that it's me and everything of my embodiment with the sound. And I also think that it works the other way around as well. So much that the drum actually is i feeding me, it's playing me as much as I'm playing the drum actually. This is like a circular movement that is constant when I perform and playing, and I'm trying to get this unison vibe of me and the drum in the kind of a co-creational aspect.