

C.O.M.M.E.N.T.A.R.I.V.M.

SYNTAGMA MUSICUM

Interpretatio Obscurorum Omnium Operum

THEÁOMAI INSTRUMENTORUM ET MACHINARUM

Schaeffer stated: “when I proposed the term ‘musique concrète,’ I intended... to point out an opposition with the way musical work usually goes. Instead of notating musical ideas on paper with the symbols of solfege and entrusting their realization to well known instruments, the question was to collect concrete sounds, wherever they came from, and to abstract the musical values they were potentially containing.” According to Pierre Henry, “musique concrète was not a study of timbre, it is focused on envelopes, forms. It must be presented by means of non traditional characteristics, you see... one might say that the origin of this music is also found in the interest in plastifying music, of rendering it plastic like sculpture. Musique concrète, in my opinion led to a manner of composing, indeed, a

new mental framework of composing”. Schaeffer had developed an aesthetic that was centred upon the use of sound as a primary compositional resource. Schaeffer’s use of the word jeu, from the verb jouer, carries the same double meaning as the English verb play: “to enjoy oneself by interacting with one’s surroundings,” as well as “to operate a musical instrument.” | Elliott Jones.

Absolute music is that music composed to represent only itself excluding any extra musical intent. Program music is instead the music that intentionally wants to tell a story, describe a landscape or emotional states, imitate natural sounds [...] | Ennio Morricone, Goffredo Petrassi, G. Gentili.

MEGISTEMA SYNTAXIS

T	S	S	S
T	T	T	S
T	S	T	T
T	S	S	T
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Tele.s.therion music program it's based on the use of techniques and dynamics borrowed from musical genres such as Jazz and Rock, and thus from the practices of the radical primitive Blues that unites them, and that can be find ourselves in the original Black Metal music, introduced here as an interpretive key inside of a compositional and executive system linked to practices carried out by the fringes of classical, modern, non idiomatic, contemporary, and avant garde music (with a special

interest on the "concrete and acousmatic process"), sound art, improvised, atonal, black, dark and doom heavy metal, searching for the roots of the meaning of these terms, for their sonic phenomenas, their thought forms, before they became a music genre. What we commonly know today as black metal, it's just one of the possible "forms" availabes. It is necessary start to watch through the veil of this "genre", with an "upside down" point of view, to discover its "das unheimliche", to transgress the stereotopies and cliché, and design new possible forms whithin this musical dimension; to start a new auditory journey to the roots of Black Metal music. The Black Metal's engineering its mutuated by its royal descent, which is derived from the practices developped in Punk and Thrash era, and it is distinguishable by a strong interest in the aesthetic theories, focusing on the physiological effects of special "categories" such as the sublime, which here become extra musical evocative suggestions, shock tactics, hard edged, transgressive and antiestablishment attitude, iconoclasm, etc. The traditional currents of Black Metal's golden age, are channelled in the compositional method and conceptual program of Tele.s.therion, influenced by the

origin of the modern western music tradition, where in the early years of Blues music movements, was a common behaviour play music using self built or broken instruments, practices which had imprint the origin of the modern music, discovering and invent a the large spectre of timbres, rhythms and sound theories (today this tradition it's become a common field of research, including the variety of prepared instruments, and the related unorthodox creative technique of playing it), so influent to have reinvent the auditory experience (such has done by the Jazz music, Rock 'n Roll, etc...), this pionieristic exploration, born originally for an emergent necessity, must be reconsider today as a territory to explore, to develop the operative framework of references of the "blackened" music, grown with this genes.

The Tele.s.therion's compositional method, the sound matters was previously selected choosing the performers; the characters and the timbres of the sound bodies chosen for this acousmatic composition, are a unity with the personality of the author involved in the ensemble. Such as characters on the set of a movie, they play "blind" and "alone", using a script and few essential indications, but

the whole "formula" is directed from behind the curtains. To keep this aspect of independence of each sound event, each author was called to "perform himself", recording his own sessions separately, as a moment form, without knowing what the other authors involved will do. Each recording session, it's conceived and treated as a sort of "whodunit", an "event" developed inside the "locked room mystery", a narrative approach conceptually transposed in sound art, where each detail it's a foundant clues of the acoustic's scene, raw material that becomes a "sound object" per sé. The room or rooms we will be dealing with are inserted into a world created by the authors involved. Inside these "impenetrable" rooms we will have to look for details, able to contain the deep meaning of what "sonically" happened. Through an epistemology of the acoustic phenomenon, to look beyond these appearances, looking for the essential nature of things, of what is. So the authors have been chosen as sound bodies, regardless of what they would have done at the time of the fixation of the sound event, and only after, they were mixed and assembled, forming to give shape at the four dimensional scene, through the modulation of the "chiaroscuro", molding the perspec-

tive plans of the sound frequencies, in order to be later performed by orchestras of loudspeakers, through some "formulas" (of which the concept album it's one of the possibles), designed primarily as polyphonic sound projection, for hi fi stereo systems and multi channel audio spatialization systems. This music is made for an immersive (public or private), deep listening experience, designed to unleash, during the sound projection, auditory stimuli, "pareidolia", that allow to alter the cognitiveperceptual processes in the listener, to trigger imaginative subconscious and unconscious sinesthetic processes. Michel Chion define the "acusma" as a "sensory phantasm", consisting of a sound whose true source of emission is invisible. In this way Tele.s.therion music it's a device for "ghostly" manifestation of sound masses. Extended methods and unortodox practices of "sound fixation" and "sound reproducibility" to design the audible and the inaudible.

No one of the authors involved, know before their recording, what kind of concept was behind the concrete scores that each one had used to create his session. This must be to kept secret, since is part of the Tele.s.therion's design of the formula composition meth-

od, a sort of "revelation" that could be discovered only through its "mise in scene", an aural dramaturgy of psychic sound matters, where the forms results from the projection of the formula. The sound objects / sound events (authors) present in the music composition, have been triggered (through a sort of MacGuffin), influenced, programmed, directed by a "concrete score", a recording of non idiomatic improvisation, performed with an enarmonic electric bass guitar, created using modulations and combinations of tones and timbre densities and sound masses of secondary frequencies, or non harmonic resonance frequencies. This system is based on moment forming principles, a compositional approach in which the narrative line is deliberately avoided, so the components of of these moment forms, are related by a nonlinear principle of proportions or symmetry. The orchestration of all the sound objects / sound events made by the non idiomatic improvisation sessions, was performed and fixed on different media by each author separately, later, each one is linked to the others through a "diegetic dramatization", the "super formula" level, made due the audio mixing techniques. The experience of playing a Tele.s.therion concept

album, is to be taken as a starting point for a profound, introspective, phenomenological investigation, during the act of the perceptual experience. In this sense the sound can be a vehicle of knowledge. Tele.s.therion has developed a sincretic operative point of view, searching to radically force the coordinates of the common aesthetic paradigms. The σιωπή is the secret syntax of the Tele.s.therion's music theory and compositional method (related to the schola of the echemitia), and it could be briefly described as characterized by the use of thought forms instead musical sheets; "blind" performers which record their improvised music sessions instead a studio band; concrete scores instead notations; the "veil" of orchestra of loudspeakers instead the common stage music representation. An aniconic, abstract, non objective, non representational, minimalist, acousmatic and hermetic enstabliment, to let the audience play with their inner visions, and achieve the εποπτεία. | T.S.T.

ANALECTA | P R O P . V 2 2 2.
INTENSITÄT. FOR ENSEMBLE:
PLAY SINGLE SOUNDS WITH
SUCH DEDICATION UNTIL Y-
OU FEEL THE WARMTH THAT

RADIATES FROM YOU PLAY
ON AND SUSTAIN IT AS LONG
AS YOU CAN.

Intuitive music is a form of musical improvisation based on instant creation in which fixed principles or rules may or may not have been given. It is a type of process music where instead of a traditional music score, verbal or graphic instructions and ideas are provided to the performers. Intuitive music may appear to be synonymous with free improvisation or with improvised playing within open composition forms, but the collectively intuitive aspect, the emancipation from known music genres and the meditative dimension are especially emphasized by Stockhausen: "I try to avoid the word improvisation because it always means there are certain rules: of style, of rhythm, of harmony, of melody, of the order of sections, and so on". Intuitive music is not in essence irrational, but that for Stockhausen intuition must become a controllable ability, and therefore is an instrument of the project of modernity: "the investigation and instrumentalization of the world by controlled procedures". Stockhausen himself emphasised that it has nothing to do with indeterminacy: "I do not want a spiritualistic seance, I want

music! I do not mean anything mystical, but everything absolutely direct, from concrete experience. What I have in mind is not indeterminacy, but intuitive determinacy!"

I would like to speak about intuitive music this term like many other terms in the actual music is one which I have purposely introduced also not only in order to make clear that I want something specific but also to get rid of other words for example music which is played freely without any score is nowadays sometimes used called free improvisation like in free jazz dancing though there are certain rules as the word says it support it should be just otherwise they will just call free music but they say free jazz so they have certain rules to produce something that somehow is still what people call jazz then there is improvisation in folklore music in India for example though there's very little really very little actual freedom the system is extremely narrow and an Indian musician who learns from his master learns all the rules how to make the small variations with the ragas and talas and there's very little personal invention there's practically no personal event very very slow in history this way of improvising changes I tried to get rid of the word improvisation

because it always means there are certain rules of style of rhythm of harmony of melody of the formal sectioning of a musical process etc. | Karlheinz Stockhausen.

In Stockhausen's intuitive music, as well as in text-scores by other composers, what is gained from the point of view of the performer who works with composed music is the freedom to play the next sound or group of sounds when one is ready to do so, to select it on the basis of the context of what one has just played and what other musicians are playing, and to concentrate on musical quality rather than technique – instead of counting silences, playing complex rhythmic values (or rather thinking of them as complex), following a conductor's beat, all in addition to playing notes precisely written down by the composer.

Aus den sieben tagen is a set of text scores, short verbal instructions with no conventional musical notation, composed in May 1968. The usual reactions to these pieces, based more on what the scores consist of rather than on the music which is produced from them, is to talk about Stockhausen's recent musical interests and to dismiss the pieces as improvisations. | Hugh Davies.

TEO MACERO

On the Corner is a very influential and anticipatory work on musical techniques and genres to come, like post punk, hip hop, drum and bass, and electronic music. From a musical point of view the album is the culmination of a sort of experimental approach in musique concrète style that Davis and producer Teo Macero had begun to explore already in the late sixties. Other musical influences cited by Davis were those of avant-garde composer Karlheinz Stockhausen, who later collaborated with the trumpeter in 1980, those of James Brown, Sly Stone, and Paul Buckmaster (who played the electric cello on the album and contributed even to some arrangement).

The music he was interested in required him to use electrical instruments, electronic effects, and, in the studio, multitrack recordings. It was in this atmosphere that the plans for the recording of *In a Silent Way* and *Bitches Brew* were born, which, for the first time perfectly blending jazz with rock. The recording and production processes of the traces put in place by Davis and by the producer Teo Macero, consisting of a "cut and sew" of the different recordings in a real sound

studio montage, "seemed pure heresy according to the jazz canons". In his book *Running the Voodoo Down: The Electric Music of Miles Davis*, Phil Freeman writes that critics of rock and jazz at the time of the release of the album were careful not to cross over into one another's and remained fixed in their respective genres, but *In a Silent Way*, which sounded almost rock, changed everything.

Those involved in rock music had to forcefully talk about the record, noting the new direction that seemed to be taking Davis's music, while jazz critics, especially those not interested in rock, thought the opera was a betrayal of true jazz, and they received him badly. In June 1980, Miles Davis was joined in the studio by the German composer Karlheinz Stockhausen; the fruit of this collaboration is still unpublished. Barry Bergstein *Miles Davis and Karlheinz Stockhausen: A Reciprocal Relationship* "The Musical Quarterly Vol. 76, No. 4 (Winter, 1992). What we played for *Bitches Brew*, it would be impossible to write it and let an orchestra play it, and that's why I didn't write it". Davis replicated the previously tested script for *Kind of Blue* and *In a Silent Way*, bringing only simple sequences of

two, three chords and dynamic and rhythmic cues into the studio, leaving white paper for the musicians' intuition for the rest. The staff was extremely numerous, especially for what concerns the rhythm section. Davis told Macero to take care of the recording only and never to stop the tape during the recording, which lasted several days. Post production and study work were impressive for the time and for the musical genre: edits and loops were used, to the point that the entire introduction of Pharaoh's Dance was created in the studio.

From the publication of "In a Silent Way" it was clear the leading role that had the editing and manipulation in the studio of the raw sound material collected in the recording room. Of this process Miles - as he also states in his autobiography - almost completely lost interest, at least from Sketches of Spain onwards. This circumstance makes us understand what was the occult role that took the figure of producer Macero in the recording production of the second Miles Davis, until his divorce from Columbia. Teo Macero himself reconstructed his working method in various interviews, in which in practice he claims for himself the role of co author, if not of author out-court.

Corea recalls "...when Keith and I played live, there really was no communication. I could never hear what Keith was playing and I doubt Keith ever heard a note I was playing. So it was hard to really play something 'together'." Throughout his time working at the 30th Street Studio and Columbia's other New York City studios, all of Davis's music was recorded onto tape. Producer Teo Macero played a crucial role in the development of Miles Davis's electric music. Macero was often with Davis in the studio and produced or coproduced his albums from 1958 - 1983. Davis also gave him nearly free reign to edit his studio and live recordings into albums, making Macero an essential collaborator.

Macero's background in European art music, electronic music, recording studio technology, and production went a long way in helping Davis to realize his musical visions. Both men saw technology as a partner and tool in their artistic endeavors. Post production, the stage of the production process taking place after the primary recording has occurred, was highly important to Miles Davis's electric era studio albums. Macero played a large part in this. Having studied at Julliard in the 1940s and 50s

and working with composers such as Edgar Varèse afterwards, Macero was privy to the latest in avantgarde and modern art music, experiments in musique concrete, and early electronic music. Some of the new technological possibilities for post production, many of which Macero introduced to Davis, altered the way Davis worked in the studio. It can also be argued that these possibilities fundamentally shifted the way Davis conceived of making music. A key component of post production, tape editing was extremely important to many of Miles Davis's live and studio albums. With so much experimentation and improvisation going on within often bare bones compositions, there was inevitably a sizeable amount of uninspired or unusable recordings. The magnetic tape now used in studios and available in large quantities allowed for the constant recording of sessions and even live dates, which were later edited down to their best parts, at least in the eyes of the editor.

Added sound effects were also a large part of the post-production process and the creation of new aural landscapes that Davis's music was coming to rely on. Teo Macero could use echo, such as on the title track to *Bitches Brew*, to

make Davis's trumpet playing sound impossibly large and domineering. This echo came from a machine built by engineers specifically for Macero called the "Teo One Tape Delay." 31 An extreme example of post production can be heard applied to John McLaughlin's guitar playing and Jack DeJohnette's drumming on the track "Go Ahead John" from the 1974 album *Big Fun*. Teo Macero used new noise-gate technology to create a psychedelic and disorienting effect for the drums and guitar. Noise gates can be set to allow only audio signals of a certain decibel level to be sounded, and Macero combined this effect with panning the drums back and forth between the left and right stereo channels. Using another technique, multiple takes could now be layered atop one another to create an artificial duet between Davis and himself. This is also heard in "Go Ahead John," where the piece switches to a mid-section blues starting with Davis's imaginary duet. The genius of Miles Davis, however, lies in his ability to not just be attracted to new sounds and ways of working, but to hear whole new possibilities in them. Many of the jazz rock bands of the 1970s, many of which contained at least one if not multiple members who cut their teeth working with

Davis, featured electronic instruments, yet their music tends to be much more straight forward, less groundbreaking, and less radically structured than Davis's.

COMPOSITIONAL METHODS

I listened to all the session reels. There were some low moments, some starts and stops. But with all that music, what we know as Bitches Brew could have been assembled twenty different ways.
| Bob Belden.

Herbie Hancock describes the experimental nature of Miles Davis's new methods of creating and recording: "In the beginning we knew whether something we played was good or not. Even though we were trying out new things, our approach was still pretty much tied in with a more traditional way of playing. But the more the stuff developed, the harder it became to tell if what we were doing was working or not. For one thing, Miles more and more recorded things in bits and pieces, just little ideas here and there that were later on strung together. It was fascinating to work like that, but during the recording session we couldn't tell if the stuff was good or bad, or

what it was at all. We'd play and then we'd wonder, 'What was that? What did we do?' Coming into the studio with a loose concept, a specifically chosen cast of musicians, and letting the tapes roll and editing them into a new whole: this was the general outline of Davis's new recording method from the late 1960s until his comeback in the 1980s. Teo Macero explained to Ian Carr how studio access and tape editing techniques went hand in hand with Davis's new conception of music making: "The recording machine doesn't stop at the sessions, they never stop, except only to make the playback. As soon as he gets in there, we start the machines rolling. Everything that's done in the studio is recorded, so you've got a fantastic collection of everything done in the studio. There isn't one thing missed. Probably, he's the only artist in the world, since I've handled him, where everything is intact..."

There is a feedback loop between the musicians and technology involved in this process. Band members would even call Davis at home and play him music over the phone in order to get feedback. Davis still directed the sessions, but from a distance. This in turn led to exploring music that needs

time to unfurl, such as ambient music or group improvisation. Once again, the technology and the music made work together in a feedback loop, with influence going both ways. On many of these recordings, there are skeletal yet identifiable themes or motifs combined with sections of improvisation atop specific pitch centers, drum grooves, or basslines. The themes and basslines often dictate the tonal center of the music. The tonal center usually takes the form less of an identifiable key and more of pitch centricity toward one specific note.

Davis's recordings are populated with a number of excellent musicians adept at improvising, who often treat the tonal centers in different ways from one another when improvising. For example, when playing over a bassline that suggest pitch centricity to C, a soloist may play notes from a C altered scale, a C blues scale or a C mixolydian scale.

The use of various arpeggios can also suggest different tonalities. Using different scales simultaneously and shifting from one to the other is a key element of this music. This is in a way reminiscent of the earlier modal jazz excursions Davis explored on albums such as *Milestones* and *Kind of*

Blue, only with a higher degree of chromaticism and dissonance.

The amount of different ideas being explored simultaneously by the musicians creates an environment where seemingly any of the twelve available pitches can sound permissible. The editing process is used to maximize feelings of tension and release, thereby helping to create coherence among the largely improvised material. As with much of Davis's electric studio recordings, the material that formed the basis of the group improvisation and the ideas that were the genesis of "Pharaoh's Dance" are ultimately obscured after all of the post-production work and editing. The bluesy riffing of some instruments with the chromaticism of others creates a tonal environment where a number of different approaches to improvisation sound permissible.

In sum, "Pharaoh's Dance" is a long, unsettling piece of music that finds structural and textural success through the editing process. Just when the music becomes almost unbearably dense, the listener may be transported somewhere else, somewhere relatively less intense, through a segue into other recorded material, often containing the same harmonic or

rhythmic backdrop. Reusing prominent earlier material later in the piece through tape editing lends shape, coherence and a sense of intent to the overall piece that would not be present if one simply listened to the unedited sessions used to compile the finished product.

Davis's penchant for highly repetitive, hypnotic basslines is a key characteristic of his electronic era. It came in part from the influence of other musical genres using electric instruments, such as the electric basslines found in the music of James Brown. Davis may have invited electric bassist Harvey Brooks to these sessions specifically to play this role of ultra repetitive electric bass player, as he also had the much more accomplished Dave Holland playing acoustic bass at these sessions, and Holland was clearly given the freedom to explore other musical ideas outside of anchoring the group. The timbre of the electric bass and its low register allow it to play repetitive material without being cloying. The use of highly repetitive bass lines is essential to a great deal of electronic music that would come later, and Davis recognized the utility of this compositional technique before most other artists. Rock, R & B, Blues,

Soul, and Electronic Dance music all make use of highly repetitive basslines, but this sound previous was largely absent from jazz music. The view of audio recordings as an imaginary aural landscape is no longer new, so it is easy to take for granted how important this paradigm shift in the perception of recordings is to music history. At first largely viewed as a means to capture a live musical event as accurately as possible, recorded artifacts suggested new possibilities to many creative thinkers. As early as the 1940s, forward thinking musicians were hearing new possibilities suggested by new technologies. The stereo spectrum had suddenly become something of a canvas for artists to exploit.

By the late 1960s, massively popular albums were exploiting the concept of creating illusory environments in an audio recording. Almost all of Davis's albums from 1969 to 1975 can be viewed this way, as these albums were particularly abstract and genre less and focused on their overall soundscape in the general absence of predetermined structure, harmonic progression, or melodic content. A particularly useful tool in creating illusory landscapes within the stereo spectrum is what is com-

monly referred to as direct-in or line-in recording. Davis and Macero sometimes used this method for recording, leaving them with greater control over individual instruments when constructing their aural landscapes. Direct in recording derives its name from the way in which this recording process takes place. Electric instruments generally need to be amplified in order to be heard. Power cables are used to send an electric signal from the instrument to an amplifier. In some cases, this signal can be fed directly into the recording console rather than an amplifier. Recording instruments with the direct-in or line-in method allows for a great deal of control over these sounds in post-production.

Since this method eschews the use of microphones, there is generally little to no extraneous sound in the signal, and none of the ambient room sound that can be picked up by microphones. This leads to what is commonly referred to as a dry signal. Where microphones would pick up other instruments and sounds from the environment and make the complete separation of sounds impossible, direct-in recording allows for greater individual manipulation of each sound. This allows producers and engi-

neers to shape and sculpt recorded sounds through several means, including moving them anywhere that may be desired along the stereo spectrum, placing reverb, modulation, or other effects on them after the recording has taken place while not affecting the other sounds, fading instruments individually in and out of a mix, and generally creating sound events that are fictitious in the sense that the final recording is not a sound event that ever happened in the real world. Post-production has played an important role in the recording process almost since its inception, and the use of direct-in recording allows for greater control of almost all aspects of the recorded signal.

In *Running the Voodoo Down*, Philip Freeman discusses another way in which this method affected the recording of the album *On the Corner*. Saxophonist Dave Liebman was called and asked to join an already in progress recording sessions for what would become Davis's 1972 album *On the Corner*. Several musicians were already playing, and with the keyboards unamplified and plugged directly into the recording console Liebman could not hear what they were playing without headphones, of which there were no more pairs

available. Davis indicated for Liebman to approach the microphone and play anyway, with the saxophonist only able to hear the percussionists, who were not using electronic instruments, and the "keyboardists' fingers clacking" on the keys of their electric instruments. The resultant solo is the first heard on the album. Davis and Macero's use of these methods was conceived to create an aural landscape unlike any heard before, in which instruments and sounds float in and out of the mix in a way that live performance does not allow for. The concept of music acting as an aural landscape, and the composition and production of music evocative enough to invoke a listener's other senses and play with their sense of space and time predates Davis, and even predates recorded music.

The advent of recording and subsequent advances in post production processes, special effects, and stereo recording contributed greatly to this idea. These tools needed the proper creative personnel in order to be fully exploited, and Davis and Macero were a duo particularly well suited for such explorations. The variety of the music they produced together speaks to a rapid realization and utilization of the recording studio

to create new, illusory music performances. In many ways, the processes they utilized in the studio were more akin to sculpting or painting with sound than they were to traditional music performance.

Keyboardist Chick Corea points out one interesting, likely unintended consequence of moving to electronic instruments in a live setting. For a brief time, both he and Keith Jarrett were playing electric keyboards in Davis's live band. As many performing musicians can relate, the sound on stage could leave much to be desired. Corea recalls "...when Keith and I played live, there really was no communication. Miles put either keyboard on each end of the stage and I could never hear what Keith was playing and I doubt Keith ever heard a note I was playing. So it was hard to really play something together."

This gives rise to two musicians playing blindly with or against one another and inadvertently creating a new way of making music, as a sort of blind collaboration. With Davis' preferred working method of keeping his musicians in the dark and using increasingly less structured compositions, he may have even desired this effect. The

idea of playing blindly can then be brought into the studio, and indeed was used by bassists Jaco Pastorius on "Crisis," the opening track of his 1981 album Word of Mouth. The re appropriation, misuse, or unwieldy nature of electronic equipment can lead to a chaotic soundscape. While it is safe to assume that chaos would be an undesirable characteristic in most styles of music and to most listeners, it became an incredibly fertile and exciting part of Davis's music. Agharta and Pangaea contain a maelstrom of electronic sounds and textures that at times sound like the genesis of the "noise" music genre, represented by diverse artists such as Merzbow and Wolf Eyes. AA.VV. | Darren E. Shekailo | Brian Gilmore | Bshy.Krt. Vrtt.kr.

ESOTERIC FUTURISM

The Art of Noises and the occult. It is surprising how little the common perception of futurism has changed since 1967, when Maurizio Calvesi complained about the "reductive general idea of italian futurism as a simple exaltation of the machine and superficial reproduction of movement." Although the futurists did

not always agree among themselves on a definition of the movement, they certainly would not have shared a view that reduces futurism to merely materialistic terms. if a similarly reductive attitude can already be found in Varèse as early as 1917, the reduction of futurism to a materialistic movement within post - World War II art criticism was likely determined, as noted in the introduction, by a need to downplay the uneasy relationship between futurism and fascism.

Critically the most lucid figure among them was probably umberto Boccioni. Perhaps owing to a predisposition of spirit, and despite the brevity of his career, which almost did not leave him time to conclude a cycle of thought, Boccioni was one of the very few futurists to produce a volume that presented his poetics systematically. The other exception was Luigi Russolo. Although he was not as socially exuberant as Boccioni was, his thought was characterized by a surprising coherence of themes - many so extraordinarily close to those of his friend Boccioni as to suggest a sort of intersecting pollination between the two. Russolo was to repeat these early themes, unchanged in their substance, for

the rest of his life; being spiritual in character, they corresponded well with futurism's occult side. To summarize all the instances that show connections between futurism and esoteric preoccupations at various levels - ranging from spirituality to interest in and practice of the occult arts, and also including black and red magic and spiritualism - would be an ambitious undertaking.

Here i shall simply create a backdrop against which to project the fruit of research on Russolo's interest in the occult and my interpretation of his sound related activities in the context of this interest. I am not the first to mention the influence of the occult arts on the futurist movement. Sporadic references to this influence can be found in volumes, catalogs, and essays on futurism and the visual arts edited by Calvesi and Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco. Until a few years ago the only contributing monographs available were a brief article by Germano Celant titled "Futurismo esoterico" published in *il Verri*, 1970, and Calvesi's very brief article "L'écriture médiumnique comme source de l'automatisme futuriste et surréaliste," published in *Europein* 1975, in which Calvesi shows connections between medi-

umistic phenomena and the poetics of the automatic writing adopted first by Marinetti and then by the surrealists. Renewed interest in the topic began first with the extensive catalog of a 1995 Frankfurt exhibition titled *Okkultismus und Avantgarde*, which devoted much space to the futurists; this was followed by Flavia Matitti's writing on Balla and theosophy, as well as by the handsome volume by simona Cigliana (*Futurismo esoterico*), which takes its title from Celant's essay and is the most complete contribution to the topic to date. in contrast to the earlier sources cited, some of which are limited to a list of facts, Cigliana's book offers a convincing in-depth analysis of the futurists' occult frequentations, albeit primarily limited to the field of literature. The futurists' interest in the occult can be attributed to their full immersion in the culture of their period, principally inspired by French symbolism, which was in turn a reaction to Comte's mid nineteenth-century positivism and absolute materialism.

In Italy, critiques of positivism and materialism also attacked idealism, and not just in rational and dialectic Hegelian formulations but also in idealism's mainstream Italian dissemination through the

writings of the philosopher Benedetto Croce. It has been maintained that interest in the occult arts and metapsychics can be attributed to the futurists' attraction to the then current understanding of science. There were those who, considering the future of scientific research, maintained that science should include among its fields of inquiry the study of paranormal phenomena and confer legitimacy upon it, since this was the natural direction toward which science was already tending.

This view may be true, but it offers only a partial picture of futurism, and it bears the further defect of again putting science and technology at the center of the futurist poetic meditation, as if they were the end of this meditation instead of, as we will see, the means. Already at this stage, however, it is clear that these occult interests were poles apart from an aesthetic conception preoccupied exclusively with the "simple exaltation of the machine and exterior reproduction of movement." The futurists' interest in science was not always exclusive or absolute, and it was not always blind idolatry. Interest in the occult would seem to contradict the attention the futurists gave to the latest

discoveries of the science and technology of the period. But from the middle of the nineteenth century on, interest in the occult was increasingly shared by scientists and occultists alike, generating such terms as "scientific occultism," which further muddied the waters. Increasingly spreading an image of the universe as an organism animated by mysterious and supernatural forces, new scientific discoveries made between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first years of the twentieth showed that idealism, positivism, and materialism gave too restricted a vision of natural phenomena and the cosmos. Celant maintains that both Balla and Bragaglia were pointed to the reading of occult texts by the brothers Arnaldo and Bruno Ginanni Corradini, counts of Ravenna, given the brothers' precocious interest in the occult sciences, their influence on the futurist movement in occult matters during the early years may have been decisive.

Their first pamphlet, *Metodoof* 1910, which both of them signed with the pseudonym A.B.C., clearly established the coordinates of their theoretical position and aesthetics. The signature refers to their initials (Arnaldo Bruno Cor-

radini), but of course it also references the first three letters of the alphabet and the "abecedario," the alphabet book. This is appropriate, given that the brief treatise had an educational purpose. The physical, intellectual, and spiritual education of the individual promised in its pages is obtained through gymnastics (or exercises), diet, the study of Eastern disciplines, meditation, and yoga. The treatise, written more than twenty-five years before Luigi Russolo's *Al di là della materia* (1938), mentions suggestive therapy, yoga, hypnotism, and magnetism and cites the experiments of Mesmer, Puységur, and Baraduc. Metodo had considerable success and acquired numerous admirers and followers for the Corradinis.

"it is necessary that we give our passion to the dead things of nature so they acquire in our eyes the vitality of the artwork."

The conception of the artist as a medium (Boccioni would say clairvoyant) and the aim of painting "not the attitudes of a human, contorted in pain, but the vibration of his pained soul or Pain itself," are positions that Boccioni had established in his 1911 Roman lecture. For Russolo, the intonarumori was an alchemical experiment in the

creation of life, which futurists believed was the only process capable of producing an art that could truly be called "spiritual." In Russolo's experiment, raw matter (in the form of pure noise) is transformed by means of a mechanical instrument (the intonarumori) functioning as an alchemical crucible or *vas*, through a cunning process with a mechanical side (enharmonic transformation) and a spiritual one (infusion of energy). At another level, the noises produced by an orchestra of intonarumori (a chaotic, complementary multiplicity that can be read within the alchemical opposites of salt and sulfur, i.e., masculine and feminine) are transfigured through the catalyst (in alchemy the catalyst would be mercury) of futurist simultaneity and dynamism into a synthesis fusing these opposites into unity.

LEVEL I : Incited by the spirits, the artist / clairvoyant spiritualizes noise through mechanical means - the intonarumori - which render it continuous and enharmonic thought - forms.

LEVEL II : Through a dynamic process of synthesis of multiplicity into unity, of chaos into cosmos, the orchestra of intonarumori as a whole creates the Art of Noises

sound-forms.

LEVEL III : The infusion of life energy from the Art of Noises acts as a spiritual soundtrack, so that thought-forms + matter result in materialization incarnation, awakening.

In the first level, noise becomes spiritual as a result of the *intonarumori* being tuned and endowed with enharmonic (i.e., microtonal) possibilities. In the second level, an orchestra of *intonarumori* produces a spiral of noises that re-creates the world first as a simultaneous chaos and then as a unity. In the third level, the artist-creator medium, who spearheaded the process, can communicate with the spirits, who, against the soundtrack of spiritual music, are now able to materialize (fig. 19). Thus the artist-creator, in the act of producing noise, conjures up the spirits of the dead so that they excite his states of mind to project themselves as thought-forms onto the "bodies" constituting his own aura. The states of mind produced in the artist-creator by the spirits that he himself has conjured up influence him in the process of creation, so that the possessed artist works as if taking dictation. This is precisely the process that Russolo stages in *La musica*;

through the *intonarumori* he transformed raw matter (noise), creating from it what the futurists considered the only true art: new spiritual life. Creation must occur through a transfer of vital energy. The energy necessary for transformation is achieved with the help of the psychic powers of the spirits conjured by the artist-creator. In his essay "Raggio," Ardengo Soffici offered a synthesis of this process: "A privileged organism, a center of extra powerful vital force, can in a certain moment and under certain circumstances attract and concentrate within itself its distant parts, the peripheral waves of its energies, making them concrete."

The *intonarumori* is not an instrument that produces noises by imitation: the noise that the *intonarumori* produces at the beginning of the transformation process is only raw matter awaiting elevation by the artist-creator, who has to struggle against its materiality. Boccioni, recounting the function of the *intonarumori* to Giovanni Papini, wrote, "*intonarumori* (the word itself tells you) does not mean noise pure and simple, i.e., raw reality, but intoned noise, therefore lyrical elaboration of new noise realities, which are acoustically the essence of modern

life." At the first level, the *intonarumori* is a means to produce noise, making it available as primal matter to be transformed; but it can also enable the channeling of the spiritual energy gathered by the artist-creator, infusing its energy into the noise matter and transforming it by elevating it into something spiritual: into art that has the gift of being alive.

At a second level, an entire orchestra of *intonarumori*, conducted by the inspired artist taking spiritual dictation, holds the cosmogonic ambition of re-creating the world (by substitution, not imitation) through the spiritualization and synthesis of the manifold and complementary into essential unity. At a third level, the *intonarumori* is a "portal to the beyond": during the process of creation, as the artist-creator is delivered to a more elevated plane of consciousness, he can communicate with the spirits of the dead that he has conjured up, spirits that fluctuate in that same plane awaiting for reincarnation. Throughout this three level process, the spirits produce thought-forms - and, above all, sound-forms - through the mediation of the artist-initiate. These forms in their turn emit vibrations that influence the aura of every individual present in their field of

action; under certain circumstances these forms can also materialize into bodies. How does spiritualization of noise matter take place? Russolo effectively described this process of transformation in *The Art of Noises*: Noise must become a prime element to mold into the work of art. That is, it has to lose its character of accidentality and become an element sufficiently abstract to achieve the necessary transformation of any natural prime element into every abstract element of art. And so, although the resemblance of timbre with natural noises may be attained by my noise instruments even to the point of deceiving the ear, as soon as it is heard to change in pitch, the noise loses its episodic, solely imitative character. Noise therefore loses entirely its character of result and of effect, which is bound to the causes that produced it (motive energy, percussion, friction through speed, bumping, etc.), causes resulting from, and inherent in, the purpose of the machine or object that produces the noise.

And since we dominate the noise - which we freed as described from the necessities that produced it - by deliberately transforming its pitch, intensity, and rhythm, we hear it suddenly become autono-

mous and malleable matter, ready to be molded by the will of the artist. Reading the passage metaphorically places Russolo within romantic aesthetics. But the occult meaning of his words is paradoxically revealed when they are read in their literal sense. The *intonarumori* is an artificial mechanism, or rather, is a medium for spiritualizing matter and, from it, recreating life.

Russolo believed that this spiritualization was possible because when the *intonarumori* transformed the noise it had produced by rendering it free to exist in what he called enharmonic space. in this way noise loses its materiality: it transforms itself, becomes abstract, and spiritualizes itself. Enharmony in changing pitch, the *intonarumori* was not limited to the tempered chromatic scale. since it is necessary, when creating a spiritual reality, to re-create the same properties encountered in nature and life, and to enslave those properties, the intonation of the noise must use the infinite spectrum of pitches available through the "enharmony" we experience in the everyday world. in Russolo's words: "The infinite ways in which noise is produced in nature, in life, and above all in machines, offer a large field for

the study of these different ways of producing noise vibrations; these ways had to be translated so as to make possible variation of tones, semitones, and all the enharmonic passages that other musical instruments do not have but that are so often found in noises of nature and life." The term enharmony is key to the art of noises, but the reader should be aware that, as used by the futurists, it deviates from the common meaning. As used by them (including Russolo), enharmony designates a microtonal musical system that adopts as its compositional material not only every pitch present in the chromatic scale but also all the microtones generated by dividing the octave (and therefore the tone) into infinite parts.

Pratella was the first futurist to use the word with this precise meaning in his "La musica futurista: Manifesto tecnico" of March 29, 1911. We futurists proclaim that the search for and the realization of the enharmonic mode is a progress and represent the victory of the future over the chromatic atonal mode. Whereas chromaticism only takes advantage of the sounds contained in a scale divided by minor and major semitones, enharmony, by contemplating also the slightest subdivi-

sions of the tone, not only offers our renewed sensitivity the greatest number of determinable and combinable sounds but also provides us with new and more varied relations of chords and timbres. But above all enharmony grants us the natural and instinctive intonation and modulation of the enharmonic intervals, presently unproducible given the affectedness of our tempered system-based scale, which we wish to overcome. We futurists have long loved these enharmonic intervals that we find only in the off key notes of the orchestra, when the instruments play in different tunings, and in the spontaneous songs of the people, when they are intoned without preoccupations of art.

The term enharmony derives from ancient greek musical theory. in its original meaning, the term enharmonic designated one of the three systems of greek music — the other two being the diatonic and the chromatic. The enharmonic system was based on a scale obtained from the union of two descending enharmonic tetrachords. Because an enharmonic tetrachord contains a central interval smaller than a semitone, Pratella extended the meaning of enharmonic to designate a musical system in which all of the infinite microtonal

pitches could be used. In the chapter "La conquista dell'enarmonismo" ("The Conquest of Enharmony"), he elaborated upon Pratella's conception, even citing part of his "Manifesto tecnico della musica futurista." Russolo began by attacking the tempered system, the adoption of which, he argued, had not only caused the richer, greek meaning of the term enharmonic to disappear but also reduced the term exclusively to define the relationship of the homophony between two notes that carry different names (e.g., C-sharp and D-flat).

The greatest fault he found in this system was not a matter of terminology, however: "Dividing the octave into only twelve equal fractions and adopting this temperate scale in all of the instruments, has lead to a considerable limitation of the number of available sounds and made strangely artificial the few that are available. Temperament, with its homophony, has in a sense torn the notes apart from each other, taking away the most subtle bond that joins them together, i.e., the fractions of a tone smaller than the present - artificial and monotonous - semitone." Russolo contrasts the equal temperament system with the enharmonic one he realized in the

intonarumori, by means of which he was able finally to "overcome the stupid barriers of the semitone" and which allowed sustained notes to change pitch "by enharmonic gradations" instead of by leap. The noises emitted by the intonarumori in fact move from one pitch to the next in glissandi, like sirens, showcasing both their conferred enharmonic properties and the theory upon which these properties are based. Beyond the process of spiritualizing / sanctifying the noise (first level) and that of synthesizing different noises into unity (second level), Russolo contemplated a third level. During the creative process described so far, the inspired artist is transported to a higher plane of consciousness, which allows him to comprehend the world from a privileged point of view.

At this stage the artist enters a new level, one in which he can communicate with the spirits of the dead he has conjured up, who fluctuate in the same plane, awaiting reincarnation. The intonarumori were thus intended as a portal to the beyond; the disturbing brute materiality of their noise was the call that conjured the spirits - a futurist, simultaneous, and dynamic call that was to guide the artist creator in his process of

transformation. Testimony of mediumistic music - that is, music produced at séances where a medium - musician plays under spirit dictation - became increasingly popular from mid - 1800 on, and in Russolo's day the practice would not have been unusual. The most convincing testimony of Russolo's mediumistic music practices once again comes from Paolo Buzzi, Russolo's intimate friend from the time of their first futurist struggles until Russolo's last years in Cerro di Laveno. The recreation of spiritual life carried out by the intonarumori was the path that, as the final consequence of the materialization of thoughtforms, conducted the dead toward reincarnation. The life created by the intonarumori can, then, be considered the life of spirits incarnating from the beyond. | Luciano Chessa.

RITUAL BLACK METAL

On Metal music in a general sense or on Metal music in general, it is a brief overview of the history its philosophical and discursive background, and its various esoteric connections is needed in order to contextualize the particular forms and expressions of Metal this article deals with. This is particularly necessary in relation to so

called Extreme Metal, due to developments in it being particularly pertinent to "the occult turn" in the contemporary scene. The beginning of Heavy Metal as a musical genre is usually traced to the late 1960s, Blues based Hard Rock, Psychedelic Rock, Punk and Post Punk influenced.

Sonically, Metal music is characterized by "heavy drum and bass, distorted guitar, and a powerful vocal style that uses screams and growls as signs of transgression and transcendence." Metal has from the very beginning embraced occult notions and themes.

Already the Blues that preceded it was surrounded by stories of deals between musicians and the Devil. The occult was the dominating theme in the slow and brooding genre known as Doom Metal [which start since early 70s]. It is, however, largely with Black Metal that the engagement with the occult started to be more structured and sustained, with undertones that can more clearly be categorized as religious. Most bands in the scene self-identify as "Black Metal," but musically there is considerable diversity. [...] The emergence of an occult focused scene of Extreme Metal which I have termed Ritual Black Metal. One interesting fact

about the Ritual Black Metal scene is the tendency to focus so strongly on an "occult core" as the defining feature that musical attributes are overshadowed. [...] Consequently, the scene involves bands such as [Sodom, Hellhammer, Bathory, Behemoth, Infernal Majesty, Demoncy, Blasphemy, Von, Summum, etc] that can in a musical sense easily be identified as Black Metal, as well as bands such as [Moevot, Aakon Keetreh, Amaka Hahina, Profane Grace, Abruptum] that have closer musical affinities to other genres. | Kennet Granholm. | Bhashyakrit Varttikakara.

ACOUSMATIC PRACTICES

In the ceremonies of Voodoo there is no audience. Some may dance and some may watch, but those roles may change several times in a ceremony, and all are participants.

APOPHENIA VEL PAREIDOLIA

Pareidolia (from the Greek *èidolon*, "image", with the prefix *parà*, "near") is the subconscious illusion that tends to bring objects or profiles (natural or artificial) from the random shape to known shapes. It

is believed that this tendency, which is a special case of apophe-
nia, has been favored by evolution
(anticipation, pre cognition), since
it allows the identification of dan-
gerous situations even in the pres-
ence of few clues, for example by
managing to spot a camouflaged
predator.

AGAINST THE STAGE

I often find myself struggling with
show organizers and technicians
over all the 'complications' brought
forth by my persistent refusal to
play on stage. This can happen in
any kind of space, from obscure
clubs to concert halls; across the
whole range of scenes and commu-
nities, from classical / contempo-
rary music to rock / techno envi-
ronments, or even experimental
events. Worldwide. The stage is
everywhere. It is inextricably
attached to the performance of
live music. While this seems to be
the natural order of things for
most musicians, it is a serious
problem for me. Furthermore, I
believe it is also a serious problem
for music itself; at least for a
certain conception / appreciation
of music involving a strong abso-
lute sense, which not only does not
require the stage but is also funda-
mentally affected by it. I am talk-

ing about the dissipative action of
the stage on the sonic material
itself and, consequently, on all the
potential levels of experience and
transformation sparked by the
latter, from the perceptual to the
spiritual. This is a complex and
variegated story that started long
ago and I will just refer here to
some of its more recent conse-
quences. Rock / pop culture has
inherited -- or has accepted -- the
stage as an essential feature of its
public realization directly from the
traditions of opera, concert halls
and variety shows (these being, in
turn, transpositions to music of the
more ancient strand of theater),
which developed and constituted
its dominance over a period of
more than two hundred years prior
to the apparition of rock. In this
tradition, the dedicated contempla-
tion of the vocal / instrumental
performance is a key element of
the music event. Besides the obvi-
ous differences, a rock / pop show
shares this devoted contemplation
of the music-making on stage. In
rock / pop it takes a variety of
forms, from appreciation of musi-
cianship (as also happens so
fiercely in jazz) to idolization to
pure mega spectacle. These com-
bine in different ways and are
sometimes all present and all
intensified in a synergistic manner,
as in heavy metal (which in many

respects is a modern form of intense opera). Now, I don't have anything against this form of contemplation per se (besides my personal lack of interest in it) and I do understand its appeal and cultural significance. Nor I am referring to issues of power / dominance, which I find misleading and irrelevant for this discussion.

The situation becomes more problematic when we look at what could be considered as the more recent qualitative transposition of the stage: that from rock / pop to electronic music. By electronic music I refer here to music manifestations that have electronic means of production, transformation and diffusion of sound in the foreground of its practice and its aesthetics, from classical electro-acoustic to underground experimental music to electronica. It seems that both artists and audience of electronic music have also inertly accepted this inherited tradition in the live presentation of the music. Even to perplexing situations on stage such as symbolically substituting performers by speakers, manipulating a bunch of analog electronics on a table, sitting in front of a laptop or upgrading the DJ to on stage status. What rock / pop shares in this respect with classical music is

the visible intricacy of instrument playing. The degree of appreciation of a violin soloist or an electric guitar solo come to a common ground for both the classic music and the rock / pop aficionado, and this actually indicates a relevant shared area in the system of values in music for both of them. Masterful skills resulting from years of practice, discipline, knowledge of the instrument and, in the best case, a touch of genius for its control and expression. From my perspective, electronic music doesn't need this.

Of course it can have it, it can develop its own versions of it (as indeed it does). But it's not inherent to it, it's not a natural consequence of the practices and essential manners of the operations of electronic music, but rather a symbolic acceptance of a tradition of a very different nature (in this regard, probably an opposite nature). What is more important, I believe, is that by blindly following this tradition it wastes the potential for strengthening a most important breakthrough in music of perhaps historical proportions. One of the better and most significant qualities of the practice of today's electronic music (especially after the aesthetic and technological liberation that occurred during

the 80s and 90s) is the forceful absence of the mastery of the instrument. This is due to two main reasons: the disembodied electronic instrument of today (collections of variable electronic modules connected in all sorts of combinations, pieces of software, etc.) mutates constantly, the access to each one of its mutations by sound creators (that is, anyone willing to be such a thing) is virtually instantaneous. | Francisco López

THE KULESHOV EFFECT

Beyond Acousmatic Black Metal, toward a Non-Auditory Black Metal music: the constitutive elements of the conceptual's researches of "non auditory black metal music" is made up of instructions and processes, programmed models to interact over time with the natural unconscious mental activity of the user, in order to develop a deep dissociative state. The user will be able to bring back to the experience of a Black Metal album without going through the physical form of music, reconditioning the fruition model, the "medium" directly becomes the own memory, its own imaginative activities and its own inner speech. | T.S.T.

LOCKED ROOM MYSTERY OR CHAMBER OF REFLECTION: THE LOGICAL ATOMISM.

I forgot the word that I wanted to say, and thought, unembodied, returns to the hall of shadows. | O. E. Mandelshtam.

The term "sacred" is here to refer, to put it psychoanalytically, to the dimension of the "unconscious and subconscious"; sacred is therefore the seat of "angels and demons" to say it in a Gnostic sense, or "daemon" or "genes" say it in the Greek pre Socratic sense, or "Ka and Ba" in the ancient Egyptian way. The "mystic" term derives from *mystérion*, a secret thing, derived from the verb *mýo* (closing your mouth and eyes): *mystikós* is what is "wrapped in secret", "*mýstes*" indicates the one who is set aside for a secret. Here the "initiates" to the Eleusinian Mysteries were called "*misti*".

In logical syntax the meaning of a sign should never play a role. It must be possible to establish logical syntax without mentioning the meaning of a sign: only the description of expressions may be presupposed.

S = S (L. O. A. I)

Acousmatic Black Metal

[...] I'm caught in a thunderstorm, and I've missed my train, there are no shelters in this place, I'm obliged to take refuge, into this old cemetery, that seems abandoned [...] | Steve Sylvester, Paul Chain.

The Artificial Intelligence built by Adam King, the full sized GPT2 model, called 1558M, is a neural network host at "talktotransformer.com" use to self generate the text below, starting from the few lines above.

[...] I don't have any memories. In this state all i see is blackness. That black hole is where all our experiences are, we do think that after the big bang, universe, we live in same thing, but we're just living in illusion, right? So how are we all alive? I know this is some kind of trick, but i am really feeling weird, don't know why? Maybe it's just me? Maybe this is just my brain reacting, trying to protect me? So if i want to write I need you. Please you to read the sentences with me. Please you to listen to my mind. I have to write some lines and i need you. I'm in a lonely place and i have to find my voice! Please listen my mind. This is a place where you bury the dead and you bury the dying. When you're in this place, the old

cemetery, where everyone goes, where they put the dead. And they bury them and they bury you. As I sit on one of the caskets. I try to figure out what happened. And I have no idea. A man with blood on his face. As I kneel between the caskets. I try to figure out what happened. (I can't figure it out, no idea what's behind the curtain). There's no one here. I'm being haunted! You see there's a hole in the earth. I'm trapped here forever. Here I stand in the twilight. With my eyes peeking into the depths the only light shining bright into my head. It's a lonely place here. A cold wind blows through the dead night, a dead end lies before me. A lonely cemetery. I've taken refuge into this one little place, here in the depths of the graveyard. I find comfort in the silence and death. My soul must have a home. I am trapped in this cemetery. I do not know what is in store for me. I'm trapped in this graveyard. There's no more light. I can't go any closer. What was it? And this night? This is my fault, I just don't know what is happening to me. Is this a monster... Is this a monster? Is this a monster? Is this a monster? Is this a monster? Is this a monster? Is this a monster? Is this a monster? Is this a monster? I'm still sleeping. You have to help me, okay?