

Catalogue

Concert-documentaries

in spatialized sound

*Benoit Bories, sound artist, Faïdos Sonore, <http://faidosonore.net>
benoit@faidosonore.net*

Preamble / Principle of the documentary concert

For five years now, I've been keen to take my creations out of the realms of radio broadcasting and podcasting, in order to offer spectacular live forms in immersive sound (multiphonic devices or binaural headphones reproducing the sensation of listening in three dimensions). I divide my documentary sound creations into several parts. Between each of them, I play a live musical composition made up of the sounds heard in the previous narrative section. These musical moments have the advantage of keeping listeners in a bubble of mental images created by the narrative part they have just heard. These concert forms are conceived as dreamlike journeys into the particular, sensitive worlds of the characters encountered throughout the story. In general, the sound system consists of eight sound sources surrounding the audience, known as octophonic diffusion.

As far as possible, I try to perform in places that resonate with my piece: placing extra loudspeakers in places that make materials/structures vibrate, bringing out sound details/voices through a window or reverberating them in incongruous spaces. The place is then inhabited by a strange presence. We call this in situ spatialization. This spatialisation allows us to propose a staging that assimilates the place of diffusion to a dreamlike sound machine.

I often juxtapose different layers of sound to create resonances between memories and present-day sounds. I wanted to maintain this principle in my concerts by creating a confusion between the composition and the actual sounds of the venue. Using different stereo microphones set up on the site, I insert the current atmosphere of the place into the performance. I transform it in real time using acousmatic processes to suggest entry into a more dreamlike dimension. So at the start of the performance, the audience is unknowingly listening to the sounds of the site captured in real time on the octophonic system. The composition begins after a slight transformation of these sounds. There's a feeling of being in a time machine. At certain points in the performance and at its end, I gradually return to the ambiances captured by the microphones. At the end of the show, it takes several minutes for the audience to return to reality. The reverie is thus prolonged. The aim of this sound system is to immerse the audience in active listening. It makes them lose their sense of direction, taking the auditory experience even further and encouraging them to let themselves be carried away by the sound environment of the venue.

I also incorporate connected objects, linked to the narrative of the story. There are moments when I break the rhythm, bringing to the fore these soundscapes captured in real time, which create hollows that refocus the listener. I use these moments to propose an acousmatic composition that I gradually build up in successive layers, according to a particular scenography: I combine sound materials (transformed or not) with the manipulation of certain objects symbolically linked to the characters or the narrative. In concrete terms, I

manipulate objects that are visible to the audience, launching certain sound elements managed by the Playtronica interface, which lets you associate sounds with a physical object by touch.

In the following section, the reader will find a list of the pieces presented in the form of a documentary concert. The links given to listen to the pieces are the stereo versions (to be listened to with headphones) broadcast on podcast and radio. The concert versions last about half an hour longer.

List of sound performances

Bits of history from French internment camps

The four performances can be used to create a unique programme, covering the history of the French camps from three angles.

- **Sœurs de camp (Camp sisterhood)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, Arte Radio, march 2013, 2ème prix au Prix Europa 2013, originalité de l'écriture documentaire du Prix Italia 2013 et 1er prix de la catégorie Documentaire du Prix Bohemia 2013, live version 4.1.

Three women talk about their time in the Brens concentration camp in the Tarn region of France. Their memories are surprisingly full of tenderness, friendship and creativity in such a sombre context. 30 minutes

http://www.arteradio.com/son/616198/soeurs_de_camp/

- **Un temps de cochon (Pig's weather)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS), avec le soutien du fonds Gulliver SACD SCAM, décembre 2019, Prix Ondas Barcelone 2019, 2ème prix catégorie binaural Grand Prix Nova Roumanie 2019, finaliste Nyork Radio Award 2019, nomination Prix Italia 2019, live version 8.1.

A documentary sound creation in which the stories of the escape of five former Spanish refugees during the Retirada are interwoven with vivid footage of their current struggle to preserve the place of memory of their former French concentration camp, threatened by a planned industrial pig farm.

<https://soundcloud.com/labo-rts/un-temps-de-cochon-binaural>

- **Les gardiennes du temple (The guardians of the temple)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, Théâtre des Quatre Saisons, le Florida, GMEM, RTS, 2022, nomination IDA Awards Los Angeles 2022, version performative 8.1 et 12.2.

Documentary and acousmatic sound creation following the journey of two sisters who grew up in the former French Indochina camp in Sainte-Livrade.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/les-gardiennes-du-temple>

- **Traversées (Your way) ~ Mémorial de Rivesaltes et SWR (Allemagne) ~ Août 2024**

Fiction following the story of four women who were interned in France and left to perform forced labour in Nazi Germany. Live musical sound performance in binaural mobile listening and stereo broadcast for radio and podcast. A French and a German version, live version 8.1.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/traversees-67-minutes>

Human-environment relations

The four plays presented can give rise to a single programme, covering this theme in three distinct territories. The voices are in a foreign language. The translations can be broadcast in real time, thanks to a graphic animation specially dedicated to sound writing.

- **Gateway**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore/Bogong Center for Sound Culture avec le soutien de l'Institut Français, l'Alliance Française, 2017, pièce sélectionnée pour les festivals Radiophrenia à Glasgow, Soundscapes à Malmö, Naisa à Ottawa, Giardini del suono à la Villa Sciarra à Rome et Superfield festival à Melbourne, live version 8.1.

I was hosted in residence at the Bogong Center for Sound Culture in Melbourne to make a sound creation presented at the Super Field festival at the RMIT Design Hub in Melbourne in December 2017. "Gateway" is a composition woven around short stories telling of Aboriginal people's connections with their environment, during different important phases of life in the region. In its own way, "Gateway" proposes to make these changes audible.

<https://soundcloud.com/naisa/benoit-bories-gateway>

- **La foresta dei violini (The violin's forest)**, coproduction, RSI, avec le soutien de l'Office de Tourisme du Val di Fiemme, été 2020 pièce sélectionnée au festival Radiophrenia de Glasgow, au festival Pixelache de Helsinki et au Spatial Sound Institute de Budapest., live version 8.1.

The Val di Fiemme has been famous for its violin wood since the 16th century. Its inhabitants have developed a special relationship with their forest.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/la-foresta-dei-violini>

- **Bouilleur de crû (Distiller)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, RTS. Avec le soutien de la DRAC Occitanie et du centre d'art La Cuisine Négrepelisse. Sortie Septembre 2021, nomination Grand Prix Nova Bucarest 2022, version performative 8.1 et 12.2

A portrait of an itinerant distiller conceived as a sensitive and universal description of a changing farming world.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/bouilleur-de-cru>

- **Ce qui passe par la Terre (What passes through the Earth) ~ Réseau des sites cathares de l'Aude et La RTBF La Première (Belgique) ~ Septembre 2024**

Documentary on the transmission of the link to the Hautes-Corbières region between farmers of different generations, live version 8.1 and 14.4.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/ce-qui-passe-par-la-terre>

The global crisis

In general, the two plays presented below are performed back to back, a programme designed as a reflection on the current global crisis.

- **Lettre à Irma (Letter to Irma)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, RTS. 2ème prix Grand Prix Nova Roumanie, mai 2020.

This piece was written and composed four-handed with Aurélien Caillaux. It's a sound walk through the empty streets of Toulouse during the first confinement. The composition is based on the musicality obtained from the sound materials captured during our nightly street patrols over the course of a month.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/lettre-a-irma>

- **Mélasse (Molasses)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, Le Grain des choses, RTBF, novembre 2020.

It's a blurred period. We're in the middle of treacle. A feeling of immobility and uncertainty created by a succession of comings and goings that regularly take us back to where we left off. Our thoughts are clouded, partly due to a lack of sociability. The result is a need to refocus on our inner resources. Meanwhile, youth is at a standstill, just as it was in the process of building itself. Produced for the "Memories of the present, archives of the future" issue of Le grain des choses,

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/melasse>

Other sound performances

- **Une quête (A quest)**, coproduction Faïdos Sonore, RTBF, avec le soutien du fonds Gulliver. Prix Phonurgia 2017, Médaille d'argent Nyork Radio Award 2018, nomination Prix Europa 2017), live version 8.1.

A documentary sound creation in which the concrete soundscapes of a modern Dominican friary resonate with an acousmatic musical composition made up of the empty resonances of the Couvent des Jacobins, the historic site of the Dominican order transformed into a museum.

<https://soundcloud.com/phonurgia-nova/benoit-bories-une-quete>

- **Au-delà des murs (Beyond the walls)**, coproduction Mairie de Toulouse, RTS, Studio Éole et Faïdos Sonore. Sortie mars 2022.

This sound documentary focuses on the contemporary social history of the Lagrave Hospital, Toulouse's oldest hospital dating from the 13th century. Based on an acousmatic composition of the sounds of this empty historic building, evidence of its contemporary history emerges.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/au-dela-des-murs>

- **Paléficat ~ UMR LISST (DR), UT2J, Benoit Bories ~ Été 2024**

"Paléficat" tells the story of the uncertain future of a piece of land. The certainty of a landscape transformation, the new face of which almost no-one knows yet. Probably the disappearance of the last traces of the market garden belt in the Toulouse metropolitan area. In this "agricultural pocket", irrigated by the river Hers, but already surrounded by buildings, bordered by the ring road and bled by the Boulevard Ubrain Nord (BUN), there are plans for urban densification. Housing instead of fields. And the city filling in the gaps so that new residents can soon be living here, in the Paléficat district, in a live 8.1 performance version. Finalist in the Arte Laguna Prize, Arsenal Venice.

<https://soundcloud.com/user-945903241/paleficat>

- **La petite glaneuse de sons (The little gleaner of sounds) ~ Éditions Trois petits points et Faïdos Sonore ~ Avril 2024 ~ for young ears**

A sound fable for little ears. A little girl finds herself confronted with the disappearance of her ecosystem with the arrival of industry in her mountain valley. Together with her grandfather, she devises stratagems to preserve her ecosystem. Performative version 4.1, New-York Radio Awards 1st prize in the Children's audiobook category, nomination UK Radio Drama Festival and Phonurgia Nova Awards 2024.

<https://soundcloud.com/trois-petits-points/teaser-la-petite-glaneuse-de-sons-mp3>

Bio Benoit Bories

As a sound designer, he has produced documentaries and sound creations for France Culture, Arte radio, RTBF, RTS, Deutschland Radio Kultur and ABC. His work as a sound designer began as a sound documentary. Over time, it has gradually evolved into more hybrid productions combining forms borrowed from sound art, acousmatic composition and field recording, while retaining the desire to document societal issues. As a documentary filmmaker, he has always sought to tell the story of the intimate in an attempt to make the universal resonate. In the course of his experiments, he has been led to establish a sound-writing formalism of his own. His learning and practice of sound writing are based on an in-depth training in physics, a taste for musical experimentation and a desire to confront social issues on the ground. He is keen to maintain an artisanal approach to sound engineering. It's a leitmotiv that has always been present in the construction of his sound identity. A thorough knowledge of his subjects and a mastery of all the stages involved in sound production (writing a project, developing sound recording devices, sound sampling, electroacoustic work and mixing) are vital if you want to think up a sound composition that is relevant to each project. Benoit Bories teaches documentary sound creation at Phonurgia Nova and Faïdos Sonore, and lectures at a number of audiovisual schools.

For the past five years, he has also been developing sound creations for live performance, installations and hybrid live performances. He has collaborated with several festivals and cultural venues for his performances (Quinzaine des réalisateurs in Cannes, Couvent des Jacobins in Toulouse, Hearsay Audio festival in Ireland, Polyphonik in Greece) and regularly takes part in artistic residencies abroad (Harvestworks in New York, RMIT and Bogong Center for Sound Culture in Melbourne). Benoit Bories has won several international prizes and awards for his sound work (Prix Europa, Prix Ondas, Prix Bohemia, Phonurgia Nova Awards, New-York Radio Award, Grand Prix Nova Romania).

Technical details

The concert can take place indoors or outdoors, provided that the acoustic conditions are not too reverberant (indoors) or sheltered from outside noise (outdoors). The technical sheet is intended for octophonic broadcasting. If the programming team wishes to offer spatialised broadcasting in situ, a one-day site visit is required to determine the set-up and draw up the technical specification together. There will also need to be an additional day of testing before the concert date.

For the octophonic version, I need three hours to set up, carry out the necessary tests and adapt to the venue.

- 8.1 sound diffusion system. Broadcast systems preferably from L-Acoustics, CODA, Neumann, Meyer or other brands with a sufficiently flat frequency response. A subwoofer system is also required. If you need contacts for technical sound service providers, I work regularly with one in Toulouse. I connect to the broadcast system using XLR or ADAT via my RME sound card. I can also use a Dante viral interface. I don't need a mixing desk, just the ability to connect to the broadcast system.
- A two-metre-wide table on stage to hold the various MIDI instruments, controllers and screens.
- A projection screen behind the stage to project the subtitles of the translations if necessary, depending on the piece programmed.
- A video projector if necessary. It is also possible not to project the subtitles and to offer paper scripts. Some programmers prefer to leave the audience free to read the translations at their own speed so that they can immerse themselves in the sound.

Reception conditions

Accommodation and evening meal for one person.

Communication

Contact the company in advance of any communication to ensure that all co-producers and supporters of the creation of the programmed work are mentioned.

Terms and conditions of sale

800 including VAT per performance. 1,200 including tax for two performances. The SACEM or SACD declarations for the sound compositions of author and performer Benoit Bories must also be taken into account, depending on the piece programmed.