

WOMAN AND HOUSE - THE CREATION OF A PERFORMANCE WORK
COMBINING ELEMENTS OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC, VOCAL WORK,
THEATRE, STORYTELLING AND RITUAL.

by

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*Woman and House - The Creation of a Performance Work Combining
Elements of Electronic Music, Vocal Work, Theatre, Storytelling and Ritual*

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ABSTRACT

WOMAN AND HOUSE is a sacred work that combines elements of electronic music, vocal work, theatre, storytelling and ritual. Simultaneous presentation and layering of the elements are essential aspects of the work, as is the fact that it is concerned specifically with female experience, rather than general human experience. Although it includes live and taped electronic music, song and a variety of different vocal techniques ranging from harmonic chanting to emotional cries to text repetition, it could never be described as exclusively a musical work. Neither could it be called a play, because it is too heavily oriented towards sound, music and ritual. WOMAN AND HOUSE is most like performance art because it challenges the commonly held belief that contemporary art forms are continuations of traditional forms and are bound within one disciplinary practice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 CHAPTER ONE. INTRODUCTION	Page 1
2 CHAPTER TWO. VOCAL WORK	Page 14
3 CHAPTER THREE. THE USE AND CREATION OF TAPE MUSIC IN WOMAN AND HOUSE.	Page 19
4 CHAPTER FOUR. THE INTEGRATION OF TAPE MUSIC AND SIGNAL PROCESSING WITH VOCALIZATIONS, VOKIAMS, TEXT AND ACTION OF THE CHARACTERS.	Page 32
5 CHAPTER FIVE. THEATRE, RITUAL AND STORYTELLING IN THE WORLD OF WOMAN AND HOUSE.	Page 41
6 CHAPTER SIX. CONCLUSION	Page 55
7 APPENDIX. SCRIPT AND SOUND/PROMPT BOOK	Page 57
8 BIBLIOGRAPY	Page 109

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

WOMAN AND HOUSE is a sacred work that combines elements of music, theatre, storytelling and ritual. The interrelation of these elements is suggestive of theatre practice, yet it is too heavily oriented towards sound, music and ritual to be thought of as a play. Although it includes electronic music, song and a variety of different vocal techniques (ranging from harmonic chanting to emotional cries to text repetition), it could never be described as primarily a musical work. WOMAN AND HOUSE is somewhat akin to performance art because it challenges the commonly held belief that contemporary art (music) is a continuation of traditional forms and is concerned exclusively with one discipline.¹ Indeed it follows the performance art convention of freely extending and applying techniques developed in one discipline to activities in another. It could almost be given that label by default because 'no-one can figure out what to call it.'² WOMAN AND HOUSE includes storytelling, in the sense that the main being in the work, HOUSE, co-exists simultaneously with the other two characters as a bodiless storyteller and singer/soundmaker, rather than as a character who enters a

¹ According to Battcock, performance art has always been loosely defined. "It encompasses a broad area of activity by a wide variety of artists with diverse styles, methods and concerns.... [It] is suited to experimentation..... undefined, there were no rules to break..... Artists were able to employ the widest range of subject matter, using virtually any medium or material; they could present their work at any time, for any duration of time, at the location of their choosing, in direct contact with their audience. Undefined, performance [art] was independent of current trends and traditional forms, and this independence guaranteed, for a time, that performance art would remain controlled and guided by the artists who originated the form." Gregory Battcock (ed) 1984. *The Art of Performance*. p x - xi. E.P. Dutton . New York.

² Laurie Anderson *Ibid.* p 105

relationship with other characters through common theatrical means such as interactive dialogue and action. Most importantly *WOMAN AND HOUSE* includes ritual. Ritual was present during the creation of the work itself (prayer, meditation and invocation took place at almost every creative session), through the performance (the sacred tea ceremony), and is also required in the process of rehearsal.

BACKGROUND

In recent times, composers creating in other media as well as music have become something less of an oddity than they used to be. Mauricio Kagel,³ Karlheinz Stockhausen,⁴ R. Murray Schafer,⁵ Laurie Anderson,⁶ Marcelle Deschenes⁷ and Bentley Jarvis⁸ are among the many who have written text, prescribed visual elements and indicated character as part of the creation of their music. This trend, I believe, comes from a general recognition that far from being the 'universal language' that many of us were brought up to believe it was, music is dependent for its meaning on cultural context (i.e. the cultural background of the composer, who is playing the music, who is listening, and the conditions surrounding the performance).

³ Sadie, Stanley (1980) *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. Vol 9 p 767. Macmillan Publishers. London.

⁴ *Ibid.* Vol 18, p 151.

⁵ R. Murray Schafer. (1986) *The Theatre of Confluence* 11. in *Canadian Theatre Revue*. University of Toronto Press. Toronto, Canada.

⁶ Laurie Anderson. *United States Part 2*. 1980. Orpheum Theatre. New York.

⁷ Marcelle Deschenes. *Lecran Humaine*. 1982 Montreal

⁸ Bentley Jarvis (with Robert Mulder) . *Lobelia Cardinalis*. Toronto, 1985

Indeed, the conditions surrounding the performance may be the most influential of all, an understanding of which was recently brought home to me through hearing Messiaen's 'Quartet for the End of Time' (written during wartime in a concentration camp), as we waited to hear the outcome of the first few days of the Iraq crisis. That powerful work affected the audience strongly in a cultural context fearful of world war, and their rapt attention acted as feedback to the performers, who heightened the drama of their performance to the extent that the performer-audience interaction was almost palpable.

Many artists attempt to develop a strong relationship between the audience and their art; if the composer can create a situation in which the music takes place, then the cultural context is in a sense partially a given and the relationship between the audience and the music is more likely to be successful.

The degree to which composers attempt to create the 'cultural surroundings' in which to place their music is dependent on the creation of a context most suitable for their music to flourish, as well as on other artistic media which captures their interest. Marcelle Deschenes and Bentley Jarvis, for example, both compose with multiple slide images forming a parallel voice to the music, because their extra musical interests are primarily visual, and because the resulting fusion of the two art forms creates an intense sensory experience which effectively blocks the cultural surroundings of 'the real world'. Laurie Anderson works with video, slides, highly visible

music technology and allusive text, all of which combine to create a metaphorical and imagistic non-linear technological world within which her music functions naturally. Like Schafer, I work with text and ritual, because my ideas are focussed on the sacred in what could be considered a secular society, and because I am interested in using text literally, expressively, metaphorically and repetitively as a means of expression.

Schafer's sacred theatrical pieces such as Princess of the Stars⁹ and Ra¹⁰ are works that combine music, theatre and ritual for the purposes of 'clearing the path between ourselves and heaven'.¹¹ Schafer is a composer, yet he writes his own text, and thinks in images and ideas as well as sound. But whereas Schafer deals with 'exaltation'¹² as it is referred to by religious practices as various as those of the ancient Egyptians and the Native Americans, WOMAN AND HOUSE remains within the psychological boundaries¹³ of woman's spirituality. In fact, I have created the cultural context of presenting two women's worlds simultaneously, one with and one without woman's spirituality.

⁹ Schafer, R. Murray. Princess of the Stars. 1985 Banff, Alberta. Canada.

¹⁰ Schafer, R. Murray. Ra. 1984 Ontario Science Centre. Toronto, Canada.

¹¹ Schafer, R. Murray (1986) The Theatre of Confluence 2. In Canadian Theatre Review. University of Toronto, Toronto Canada. p 19.

¹². Ibid. p 5.

¹³ Starhawk. 1987. Truth or Dare, Encounters with Power, Authority and Mystery. Harper and Row. San Francisco

CREATING THE CULTURAL SURROUNDINGS OF AN IMAGINARY SACRED WORLD.

The cultural context into which I place my music is a world in which a woman's spirituality is both present and absent. In this world, sound and music are the backbone of the sacred, and are presented in two contexts: the prologue, which offers us a glimpse of Mother, Priestess and Temple in a sacred tea ceremony 5000 years old; and the body of the work, which shows us mother, housewife and house in a contemporary setting framed, as it were, by the ancient tea ceremony.

THE PEOPLE AND BEINGS OF THE WORLD.

PERUSHA. The title of the work implies the setting: a woman in a house. The secular woman, PERUSHA, is denied her spirituality and is obsessed with the material world, compulsively cleaning her house and her possessions, hearing only the music of her home appliances. She has a love affair with her surrogate culture the television,¹⁴ which incessantly sings advertisements about cleanliness, reinforcing PERUSHA's compulsions and inadequacies. PERUSHA has virtually no songs or sounds of her own other than her own speech, which is very repetitious.

¹⁴ Barry Truax. (1984) *Acoustic Communication*. Ablex., Norwood, New Jersey.

JANA is a Sumerian priestess (5000 BC) who is performing a sacred tea ceremony for strangers in a temple offering them spiritual nourishment. If she is able to spiritually nourish the strangers, who are also the audience, through the tea ceremony, then she will become a priestess to GREAT MOTHER, the supreme deity of the time. JANA, who is performed by the same actress who plays PERUSHA, is in fact some combination of PERUSHA's ancestral memory, her sacred side and her alter ego. JANA's character is defined through the performance of the sacred tea ceremony. JANA speaks only once, but chants and sings continually.

MOTHER is the battered, psychiatrically abused bag lady who is PERUSHA's actual mother, come to visit after a twelve year absence. In the Prologue, she is the GREAT MOTHER, goddess of all. Dialogue between PERUSHA and MOTHER reveal a barrage of mutual abuse and betrayal. Mother wails, keens and moans.

HOUSE is a being without a movable body, whose only senses are those of touch and hearing. Prior to the opening of the work, HOUSE has been mute. Through the course of the work, she relearns to sound, to speak, and finally to sing. Being a modern house, HOUSE's soundings are all electrical. Her songs are sung with the harmonics of the sixty cycle hum (the sound of electricity), generated using the technique of Granular Synthesis.¹⁵ Her vocalisations and speech are

¹⁵ Barry Truax, (1988) Real Time Granular Synthesis with a Digital Signal Processor, *Computer Music Journal*, 12(2), 14-26.

amplified and modified by a signal processor.¹⁶ HOUSE is indeed the house that PERUSHA lives in, and as such coexists simultaneously with her, rather than interacting with her through dialogue and action. Despite this, HOUSE's sonic awakening is roughly synchronous with PERUSHA's developing awareness of her sacred side, the culmination of which takes place as the JANA and PERUSHA character fuse to become one person. As an aspect of synchronicity, PERUSHA's crisis takes place at the same time as a the climax in a story HOUSE is telling. HOUSE also sings Vokiams,¹⁷ soundings close to conventional songs. In the Prologue, HOUSE is also Temple, a five-thousand year old temple that is the home of JANA, the initiate priestess, and as such makes 'reactive music', music that is related to the natural echoes, reverberation and frequency response of a space.

THE MUSIC OF WOMAN AND HOUSE

A prerequisite for the type of music I wanted to write, was the creation of the four characters specifying the cultural context, to the degree that they interrelate almost in play-form. I want my music/soundmaking to be made from emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, based on my own understanding of some of the layers that make up female experience within western culture. Because this specific necessity is a fundamental component of my

¹⁶ For this project, a general purpose signal processor such as the SPX 900/1000 can be used which can add a number of effects to the voice, such as echo/delay, equalisation, flanging, reverberation and harmonization.

¹⁷ Vokiams are song-like fragments and finally a full song, sung by HOUSE. They are notated in Indian saregam notation.

music making, it differs considerably from music taught at music conservatories, where the ideological underpinning seems to be that music is a pleasurable addition (rather than a necessity) to the experiential life.

In conservatories and music schools in the west, music taken from European aristocratic cultures of the the previous several centuries is generally upheld as the highest model of music making. It is expected that this music making will form the musical consciousness of the individual, sublimating personal musical concerns and desires. Once internalised, it is required that this music will travel and colonize in a continuance of colonizing European traditions of the previous centuries. This removal of music from its culture, over time and space, in a sense removes it from its body (culture, land, people), thus by definition abstracting it. In addition, the analysis of the musical object itself within such institutions supports abstraction as a fundamental principle of the art form (and thus by extension the culture), through analysis of musical form and content as something divorced from the society in which it was formed.

Within the Western classical tradition as currently practiced, it is generally believed that music is an abstract form of expression that is outside worldly concerns. However, recent cultural investigations in research as various as feminist scholarly activity and anthropological investigation have pointed out that musical expression, although not a direct expression of a culture, nevertheless reflects quite accurately the predominant concerns of

the culture in which it is made. Thus the desire for music as an abstract form of expression, realistically reflects a culture which places a high value on "thought or theory, rather than matter or practice, not concrete" (Oxford Dictionary, 1986). By definition, this non-concrete music is not about the body, but rather about the mind. That the mind is free of body, and thus gender bias, is a suspect assumption that has been challenged by much feminist analysis over the last decade (e.g. Teresa De Lauretis). I also challenge that assumption, by requiring that some of the music in this work comes from the body, through the use of a variety of exercises designed to free the body to make music naturally. I am in fact making the very opposite of abstract music, corporeal music, and thus by implication exploring aspects of music and gender.

None of the music in WOMAN AND HOUSE is abstract music. For that reason it cannot be notated and distributed as an anonymous commodity, to be performed as a professional task, by any appropriately trained musician in any hall for any audience. Instead, the music/soundings come necessarily from the inner centres of the self, be they emotional, physical or spiritual centres. I deeply believe that to make music and sound from the inner self is a fundamental requirement of human nature. I also believe that the ability to do so has been submerged under a barrage of externally imposed music which have masked each individual's ability to hear her/himself truly, and thus find her/his own music. To reveal that ability again requires a number of simultaneous approaches, ranging from various listening and soundmaking exercises to processes which empower

the individual to allow her/himself to be a musicmaker. Thus the musical instruction in WOMAN AND HOUSE varies from meditative skills which empower the person to make sound, to skills which teach listening and soundmaking. This music can be roughly divided into five types which are described in detail in the Appendix.

SOUND EMPOWERMENT: THE PROCESS

Sound empowerment takes the form of sonic meditations,¹⁸ which are exercises that allow a state of relaxed body awareness through breath, enabling sound to become linked to the body resonating. Sonic meditations allow and enable the body to become the source of sound and thus locate sound/music theoretically within the gender and specific physicality of the sounder. Although the degree to which sonic meditations enable body-based musical expression is a subject for another thesis, experience has shown this work to be functionally necessary as a prelude to various listening and soundmaking rhythm exercises,¹⁹ sonic imitation exercises²⁰ and exercises working with drones.²¹

¹⁹ Dadson and McGlashan.. (1990). *The From Scratch Rhythm Workbook*. Heinemann Educational Press.

²⁰ Schafer. R. Murray. (1986) *The Thinking Ear*. Arcana Publications. Toronto.

²¹ Drones have been used musically, and occur as an acoustic by-product of certain activities in a most cultures. Drone exercises appear in the Appendix.

TEXTUAL MUSIC²²

Textual Music is the repetition of textual fragments, either by a character, or through a signal processing device. Textual music employs two very simple methods of text variation. Firstly, a word, phrase or phoneme is repeated until it sets up a rhythm, then the tempo and dynamics of that rhythm are altered in various ways. Secondly, a vowel in a word is extended into a breath-length drone to accompany the phrase or sentence being spoken. A number of minor variations on the vowel drone are permissible, such as a Doppler shift, or a very slow glissandi up or down (maximum interval of one tone).

EMOTIONAL CRIES²³

These sounds come mainly from MOTHER who wails, keens and cries to expose the anguish of the soul. The choice of sounds is up to the actor, and is developed in the specific context of rehearsal.

²² Textual music is most often found in the work of sound poets, and is explored in detail in *Text-Sound Text*. by R. Kostelanetz, (1980) William Morrow Company, Inc. N.Y.

²³ The work of Roy Hart Theatre (Arles, France) explores sound from the body through locating various emotional centres, and allowing those centres to sound.

SACRED TONINGS²⁴

Sacred tonings are mainly chants used by the priestess JANA in her serving of the tea.

SONGS OF THE HOUSE²⁵

These are all electronic and based on the harmonic series of the frequency of alternating electrical current. They are created using the technique of Granular Synthesis, and are all on tape. Their quality is sustained and expansive, with an expressive range fitting to an inanimate being such as a house.

SONGS OF THE HOME APPLIANCES²⁶

These are very simple songs based on the sounds of the various home appliances used in the work. Granular synthesis is used to create these songs, and they are on tape.

SONG: THE VOKIAMS

The only music piece that even vaguely fits conventional definitions of music are the final songs that HOUSE sings, accompanied by sacred tonings/textual music of JANA/PERUSHA and emotional cries of MOTHER.

²⁴ These sacred tonings are inspired by a number of different religious practices such as the Tibetan harmonic chant, the Hindi 'om', the Rajnish 'hum' . Berendt, Jachim-Ernst. 1987. *Nada Brahma, The World is Sound. Music and the Landscape of consciousness.* Destiny Books. Vermont.

²⁵ The songs of HOUSE are created using granular synthesis (GSAMX) to synthesize the harmonics of the sixty cycle hum.

²⁶ These songs are created using Granular Synthesis on the sampled sounds of a variety of home appliances such as the television, the vacuum cleaner and the coffee maker.

The rest of this thesis outlines the making of WOMAN AND HOUSE in detail. Chapter Two deals with voicework, and includes a discussion of 'scorpts'²⁷, sound empowerment, emotional cries, sacred tonings, text music and the vokiams. Chapter Three describes the composing of the songs of HOUSE and of the home appliances through the technique of granular synthesis. Chapter Four details techniques of performance enabling the integration of tape music and live signal processing into the spoken voice. Chapter Five - 'Theatre, Storytelling and Ritual in the Sacred Imaginary World of WOMAN and HOUSE' - is an analysis of the function of the four characters in play form in this imaginary world. Chapter Six is a summing up of the project. The Appendix includes script, mixing score, signal processing score, soundworks, scorpts, voiceworks, vokiams, rehearsal process, set, lighting and costume design.

²⁷ 'Scorpt' is a term I invented to describe a process that is a prescription for sound with some theatrical techniques attached.

CHAPTER TWO

VOCAL WORK

WOMAN AND HOUSE approaches vocal work using two methods. The first method specifies a context (the script) and a series of exercises enabling the performers to freely express in sound, various aspects of the scripted material. The second method specifies pitch/duration relationships in ways that more resemble a score, even though this material is described in other than traditional Western music notation.

In WOMAN AND HOUSE, there are thirteen occasions when extensive vocalizations are required. Five of these are described quite precisely in a score-like manner. For the other sequences, performers improvise in response to the situation and condition of the performance. In order to facilitate these improvisations, I have devised a number of exercises to train the performer in sonic improvisation. The exercises consist of sonic meditations¹ and technical/musical exercises.² Sonic meditation frees up the voice to 'be itself', since it lies within the individual body and is thus free of external imposition. The technical/musical exercises develop general musical skills such as listening, imitation, repetition and variation, and become freely incorporated into the sonic meditations.

¹ Oliveros, Pauline (1980) *Software for People*. pp 216. Smith Publications. Baltimore.

² These games come from a variety of sources - my own experience, the work of Murray Schafer, *The Thinking Ear* and the work of Dadson and McGlashan, *The From Scratch Rhythm Workbook*.

VOCAL WORK IN WOMAN AND HOUSE

Vocal work takes place in the following sections of the work.

- 1) In the Prologue, JANA repeats the text in a variety of ways and HOUSE, as Temple, sings 'Reactive Music'.
- 2) The first time PERUSHA transforms to JANA she chants.
- 3) HOUSE responds to MOTHER mentioning her own death.
- 4) The second time PERUSHA transforms to JANA she chants.
- 5) MOTHER and PERUSHA repeat sections of dialogue throughout section D, or begin a line before the other has finished. HOUSE uses breath and sound to make her speech seem continuous.
- 6) HOUSE repeats 'and waited' (Vokiam 1).
- 7) MOTHER wails/keens after 'what did he do' (end of section D)
- 8) HOUSE sings Vokiam 2 after 'this is all there is'
- 9) MOTHER wails/keens after 'listen PERUSHA listen.' (end of section E)
- 10) PERUSHA transforms to JANA and chants.
- 11) HOUSE sings Vokiam 3 (with the continuum, section F)
- 12) HOUSE sings Vokiam 5. MOTHER and PERUSHA form accompaniment to song. MOTHER keens with her. PERUSHA alternately chants and repeats text.

VOCALIZATION WITHIN THE CHARACTER/ACTOR RELATIONSHIP

What all these vocal sections have in common is that they are different for each performance, being freely composed in response to

the specific situation of the character/actor in performance, which is actually a synthesis of the circumstance the character finds herself in (the script), and the condition the performer finds herself in (how the performance is going, the relationship to other actors, audience response). Even the song and the Vokiam fragments, which appear to be notated strictly, are also subject to some free embellishment. In this case, improvisations/embellishments must be done in the manner of North Indian Vocal Raga where the performer can freely improvise as long as she or he stays in the raga (or scale) and as long as they obey certain rules about the main notes (such as rules of glissandi and embellishment which occur on the most important notes of the raga only).

In order that the actor have access to vocal material with which to improvise, a large part of the rehearsal period (at least half) must be devoted to sound work. Each rehearsal period begins with a sonic meditation and all the exercises listed in the Appendix' must be done before other rehearsal work is begun.

SONIC MEDITATIONS

The most crucial exercises for freeing the voice are the sonic meditations. The principle underlying sonic meditations is that the breath resonates the body which 'sounds' in response. The corollary of this principle is that sound lies within the body and is resonated into being through the breath in a way that is true not only to the gender of the body, but to the life experience of that particular

person. Thus music making with sonic meditations is the true voicing of that particular person at that particular time, rather than the imposed voice. Sonic meditations also always take place with other people. Listening and kinesthetic sensibilities are required in order to satisfy the community aspect of music making.

SCORPTS

Scorpts are processes for musically extending text that is normally spoken, through repetition or stretching of words on specific pitches and with specific rhythms. Pitch and rhythmic information is given to the actor who is then free to choose which word she wishes to extend. She may then choose whether she wishes to repeat a word, or stretch it. If she chooses stretching, she then has the choice to stretch it over one note, or to use a glissando. Scorpted material always takes place simultaneously with spoken text. Thus organization of how each 'musicalized' word is organized as a sequence, is constructed with the aid of a director.

VOKIAMS

Vokiams are close to conventional songs, in that their pitch and duration is given as well as the way this material is sequenced over time. They are notated in Indian Saregam notation (see Appendix).

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

A variety of technical exercises are offered to the performers to improve their listening and sound-making skills. These include rhythm, repetition, imitation and variation exercises, the practice of which feeds back into the sonic meditations. These are described in detail in the Appendix.

CHAPTER THREE

THE USE AND CREATION OF TAPE MUSIC IN WOMAN AND HOUSE

In addition to vocalizations, processed voice, and vokiams, WOMAN AND HOUSE includes about one hour of tape music. The tape music represents the electrical voice of HOUSE¹ as well as the songs of the home appliances.² Tape music is activated during the work from two sound desks, one operated by HOUSE as part of her character's action, and the other run by a sound operator. HOUSE operates a tape recorder, a microphone and a mixer, as well as a signal processing device. The sound operator controls levels from HOUSE (tape, processed voice, microphone levels) and her own tapes, through live mixing of the material to determine the overall electroacoustic sound events.³ All the tape music is created using the technique of granular synthesis. This chapter discusses in detail its creation.

WHAT IS GRANULAR SYNTHESIS?

Granular synthesis is a method of digital sound synthesis in which high densities of tiny grains of sound (i.e. shorter than a twentieth of a second) are layered accorded to various parameters. An

¹ Houses that have electricity all have a characteristic sound, the electrical hum of alternating current. It can be thought of as one of the 'voices' of a house. In North America, the electrical hum is 60 Hz. That fundamental, and many of its harmonics, can be heard in the modern home if one listens carefully. It is from the notion of listening carefully to the interplay of harmonics in the house, that I have devised these songs, which are all based on the harmonics of 60 Hz.

² Sounds of home appliances are sampled, then processed using granular synthesis.

³ How the material is mixed together is discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

appropriate visual metaphor for granular synthesis is a sandy beach. When we look at a beach from a distance, it seems like a solid, uniform surface. Yet when we pick up a handful of sand we find that it is composed of tiny grains, each one of which is separate. There is not much we can do with one grain of sand. By itself, it is too small to have much impact. But it is possible to configure a large variety of shapes (from sand dunes to sand castles) by working with a mass of sand grains, or colours, by carefully choosing and mixing the colours of the individual grains. We do not know exactly where each individual grain of sand is, but we do know the overall shape or colour, because we have chosen to group them that way. In granular synthesis, music is made by creating shapes and colours of grains of sound. Control over the shapes and colours of sound is via specification of such musical parameters as frequency bands or position in the sample for sampled sound, and the duration of the grains or the delay between them. As with the sand, we do not know the exact frequency, sample position, duration or delay of each grain at any instant. We do know however, that each grain falls within a frequency range, a sample placement, delay and duration limits (as well as other parameters) that we ourselves have specified.

The idea of the house and home appliances having "songs" has its genesis in the nature of granular synthesis, because the technique tends to generate vocal-like material.⁴ Much more than any other

⁴ By layering and repeating up to twenty grains of sound according to duration and delay patterns, as well as frequency information, certain formant frequencies in the grain itself are enriched and extended, and thus become more audible. These strongly defined regions, similar to vocal sounds, are one of the reasons why the resulting texture often resembles vocal singing. This 'voice' of the sampled sound that emerges seems thus to be the 'natural voice' of the everyday object, released through technology.

synthesis method, granular synthesis reveals⁵ the songs in the sound. With most other synthesis methods, the composer struggles to create the songs from sound. The act of composition is the act of control and mastery of the external sound object. Then the composer claims it as his/her own. With granular synthesis of sampled sound however, the opposite is true. Rather than the composer creating the songs, the songs reveal themselves through the technique. Although this may seem like a subtle distinction, in fact there is a world of difference between the two approaches. The first method creates an external music object. The second method reveals the internal music by recording a sound object, granulating the sound with the computer, and shaping and colouring it. The songs pour forth as if they've been singing all along and we have only just discovered the techniques to make them audible.

The rest of the chapter will describe the compositional techniques developed to reveal the songs of the house and home appliances, and explain in detail the physical nature of granular synthesis.

CREATING THE SONGS

For **WOMAN AND HOUSE**, ten songs were revealed: the descending,

⁵ The notion of revealing is a motive that runs through **WOMAN AND HOUSE**. For example, the 'natural voice' is revealed through various vocal techniques. Perusha's sacred side is revealed as a synchronous summing up of House's story-telling, Jana's tea ceremony, and Mother's return. Perusha's sexual abuse is revealed through her dialogue with mother. The 'Great Mother' is revealed within the bag lady, and various familial betrayals are revealed through mother and daughter interaction. The idea of the songs within, revealed through certain spiritual practices, is a feature of many of the earth religions (American Indian, African, Oceanic), and the notion of non-humans having their own songs is equally common in such religions. (Garfield, Laeh, Maggie (1987) *Sound Medicine. Healing with music, voice and song*. Berkeley, California, Celestial Arts.). I have simply extended the notion to include human made, technological objects.

the cloudy descent, the ascending, the ascending fragmented, the wailing, the continuous, the continuum, the television song, the coffee machine song, and the vacuum cleaner song. The last three are the songs of the home appliances, and the previous seven, the songs of House. In the script, each of these songs is named when it occurs.

For the songs of the home appliances, short sections of the sounds (between one and ten seconds) of home appliances were recorded. These included a coffee machine, a kettle, a television commercial, and a vacuum cleaner. Also used but eventually left out of the performance were the sounds of serving and eating a meal, a telephone and a telephone answering machine.

In the songs of House, the procedure was a little different. Although the granular synthesis program for sampled sound GSAMX was used, the initial sounds were synthesized, not sampled. All the songs of House were based on the harmonic series of a sixty cycle tone (which is the frequency of alternating electrical current). The series was generated using PDFILX, a score editor in the PODX system.⁶ It was permuted in terms of rhythm, amplitude and density, then layered using MERGE, another of the PODX programs. From this work came three different basic sound patterns: ascending patterns (which basically went up the harmonic series), descending patterns (which went down the harmonic series), and continuous patterns (in which the harmonic frequencies remained relatively static, but attention

⁶ Truax, B. (1985). The Podx System: Interactive compositional software for the DMX 1000" *Computer Music Journal*, Vol 9 No. 1.

was paid to rhythmic and timbral variations as well as glissandi and trill-like variations on the pitch). The samples of these patterns were then calculated and stored on disk so that their appearance, to the computer, was the same as sampled sounds.

The songs of House and the songs of the home appliances used all three methods of the program to granulate sampled sound, GSAMX: fixed sample, continuous sample and variable rate. These materials were then recorded onto a multitrack Otari 8 track machine then mixed down to stereo.

A TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF GRANULAR SYNTHESIS

Granular synthesis is a unique method of achieving complex sounds. Rich, complex and continually varying timbres can be created through the generation of high densities of extremely short grains of sound less than 50 milliseconds in duration. These grains of sound can either be synthesized or sampled. Control over the timbre is achieved through the manipulation of certain variables such as the average duration of the grains, the delay between the grains, the average frequency of the grains, and in the case of sampled sound, the position within the sample.

THE POD IMPLEMENTATION OF GRANULAR SYNTHESIS

Granular synthesis has been implemented on the PODX system using the microprogrammable DMX 1000 Digital signal processor

controlled by a PDP Micro 11 (LSI 11/23+). Three different methods of creating the 'unit grain' as the basis for synthesis are available:

- 1) A single oscillator with controllable frequency, waveform and duration (additive synthesis or AS).
- 2) An FM oscillator with controllable c:m ratio, carrier frequency, duration and maximum modulation index (frequency modulation or FM).
- 3) A sampled sound with controllable duration and offset time (sampled sound or SAM).

All three synthesis models give individual grains a symmetrical three part linear amplitude envelope. The default envelope has an attack and decay that is one quarter of the grain duration. Other specifications of attack and decay proportions vary from one half to one sixteenth of the grain duration.

CONTROL VARIABLES

The following control variables are available to the user to shape the sound:

Centre frequency and frequency range (AS and FM only). Offset number of samples from start and offset range (SAM only).

Average grain duration and duration range.

Delay between grains.

Delay range as alternative to duration range.

Total number of voices sounding (a maximum of 20 for AS, 8 for FM, 18 - 20 for SAM.)

Number of voices with each of three waveforms (AS only).

Average modulation index and modulation range (FM only).

Speed of output (acts as pitch/time transposition) and number of voices sounding at transposed pitch levels (SAM only).

REAL TIME GRANULATION OF SAMPLED SOUND

With sampled sound as a source, extremely rich textures can be created from recording even short sections of sound. There are three ways of working with sampled sound. In the 'fixed sample' version, a small number of samples (4032) are stored in the DMX and granulated in playback. Control parameters include offset and offset range (which affect the timbre of the sound), duration, delay, and duration or delay range (which affect the rhythm and density of the sample), and a speed control (which affects the speed at which the samples are played back, and thus the perceived pitch). All of the parameters can be changed continuously with a variable ramp rate, the effect of which is to set up automated control mechanisms to change perceived timbre, rhythm and pitch continuously over time.

Continuous Rate and Variable Rate methods differ from the fixed sample method in that they can read samples directly off a disk. Because of the relative size of the two storage methods, Continuous Rate and Variable Rate can deal with much longer samples, up to several minutes of material.

With Continuous Rate, the composer shapes and colours the sound with control parameters of offset, duration, delay and their ranges, as well as a feedback factor, which dictates how many samples are recirculated through a section of memory. The effect of the feedback factor is somewhat like conventional digital delay lines, and as with all the control parameters, this factor can be ramped.

In the Variable Rate implementation, the key difference is a parameter called 'rate', or off/on times, which is a ratio describing the rate at which new samples enter the DMX's memory from disk, compared with the synthesized output. The effect of the 'rate' control is twofold. It may 'stretch out' the time of the sample with no pitch change, which results in long sonic gestures derived from relatively short samples. Or it may be used to effectively modulate the samples in a method similar to a phase vocoder. The result of this modulation is a descending subharmonic series of frequencies from 500 Hz, since the shortest modulation period is two milliseconds.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE MUSIC

The rest of this chapter deals with an in depth analysis of two of the songs of the house, the descending, the continuous, and two of the songs of the home appliances, the television song, and the coffee machine song.

THE COFFEE MACHINE SONG

A coffee machine was recorded from the time it was turned on to the time the last water gurgled through the filter. The sounds could be categorized as gurgling, spluttering, spitting and bubbling sounds that began slowly, built up to a climax, then faded to a last splutter. About ten minutes of sound was recorded. The tape was listened to carefully several times and three sections were chosen to be

sampled: an early section when the machine was just beginning to gurgle, a middle section, which was the most dense, with bubbling, gurgling, and sputtering sounds, and the final section which was slower and more spluttery. Each section was between two and five seconds long. The three sections were recorded on disk with a sampling rate of 20 kHz. The variable sampling rate method was chosen in order to explore modulation effects when N:N ratios of on/off times result in a perceived pitch pattern based on a descending subharmonic series. Five presets were chosen with different offset and offset range positions within the sample, as well as different delay and duration times. In addition, the duration range was ramped. It was decided that the work be perceived structurally as stereophonic sequences of different N:N ratios over decreasing, then increasing lengths of time. The first third of the work uses the opening sampled section, the second third the middle section, the last third the final section. Because sampled sound tends to be non-percussive, and because coffee machines (and the drinking of coffee!) tends to be a percussive event, another layer of a very different synthesis method⁷ was added to give that effect.

As in all the songs of the home appliances, I consider the coffee machine song to be its own song, revealed through my use of granular synthesis (and Karplus-Strong). Interestingly, when I have played this song to a number of colleagues, they have all commented on how much it sounds like the feeling one gets after drinking coffee!

⁷ Truax, B. (1985). *Ibid.*

THE TELEVISION SONG

The television song is based on a television commercial that plays regularly during day-time soaps operas. The commercial is for the cleaning fluid Spic and Span, and starts off "This house is so dirty, I don't think I'll ever get it clean", then breaks into a song about what Spic and Span can do. All thirty seconds of the commercial were sampled.

The television song used all three GSAMX methods. The structure of the work was based on three layers of text repetition continuously changing on the microlevel, mixed together using variable level change. The fourth level uses the song (about what Spic and Span can do) in variable length gated chunks.

Level one uses fixed sample on a mid-range tone from the harmonic series. Initially, offset and offset range only are ramped, then duration range. Finally, the speed is changed to lower and raise the pitch in a glissando type fashion.

Level two is the phrase "so dirty". This uses the continuous sample. Duration and delay are ramped, as is the feedback, and later the speed to slow down the phrase.

Level three uses the variable rate mode with ramped duration, delay and speed, and is the phrase "never get it clean".

Level four uses the main body of the commercial and talks about Spic and Span in detail. For this section, which sounds like variable length gated chunks, I used long duration and delay times (both varying independently between 500 milliseconds and one second) and ramped offset and offset range times. After the body of the text had been repeated twice, the speed was changed to slow down the text. Finally, the last word of the commercial, which was "flash" was repeated continuously until the end of the work.

These four levels were then mixed together with continuously varying levels, so that each level has a chance take prominence.

THE ASCENDING

As one of the Songs of House, the Ascending uses a polyphonic permutation of a rising harmonic series of a 60 Hz tone. Fixed sample, continuous sample input and variable rate are used. Structurally, three repetitions of the Descending are heard with ramps on the offset range, duration and delay on the first two, and fixed duration on the third. On the third repetition is also heard a fixed sample drone on the second harmonic which fades in and out for the rest of the work, while parameters of duration, delay, offset and offset range are ramped. The Descending is then heard in retrograde (The Ascending), beginning in a very fragmented form with long delays and short durations and duration ranges. The long delays are ramped until all of the sample is heard, and it appears to

coalesce into the Ascending, which is heard twice. The Descending is then heard twice more, using the variable rate mode with a ratio of 2:1 on the lower chords, which stretches out the duration of the lower segments. During this portion, subtle variations are heard based on ramping the duration, duration range, delay, offset, and offset range within a specified range which results in a perceived phasing effect.

THE CONTINUOUS

The Continuous differs from the Ascending and Descending in that it uses fixed frequencies (rather than a series that changes) which are then modified with the speed control to give glissandi, trills and other pitch embellishments. Along with these changes, ramps on duration, delay, and their ranges result in complex rhythmic variation, and ramps on offset and offset range result in complex timbral variation. The Continuous uses all three methods, fixed sample, continuous input and variable rate.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE INTEGRATION OF TAPE MUSIC AND SIGNAL PROCESSING WITH THE VOCALIZATIONS, VOKIAMS, TEXT AND ACTION OF THE CHARACTERS

In addition to text, vocalizations and vokiams, there is a considerable amount of electronic music and sound in WOMAN AND HOUSE. This area of the work can be broken down into five areas:

- 1) tuning to the space;
- 2) processing of text; vocalizations and vokiams through signal processing equipment;
- 3) the live mixing of tapes composed using granular synthesis;
- 4) diffusion;
- 5) the sound system for the songs of the home appliances.

TUNING TO THE SPACE

In order to integrate the electroacoustic sound and music within the space, it is necessary to do what I call 'tuning to the resonant frequency of the performing space'.¹ This is done through simulating the effect of a resonant room frequency through controlled feedback with microphones subtly feeding back from speakers through

¹ All natural spaces have resonating frequencies called eigentones, which are related to the length of waveforms and the size of the space. In rooms large enough to hold performances of this nature however, the resonating frequency would be too low to be audible, and harmonics of the resonating frequency too weak to be useful. However, because I would like to establish an acoustic relationship with the space as well as the obvious physical one, I have chosen to simulate this effect electronically with controlled feedback.

various processors (EQ and Delay or Reverberation). This effect gives a certain frequency that the performers can tune to (in their Vokiams and vocalizations) and also makes the room a variable, controllable acoustic space..

THE PHYSICAL SET-UP

In order to facilitate the complex layers of electronic sound and music, and incorporate them into the story and characters of WOMAN AND HOUSE, electroacoustic sound is generated and controlled through two sound stations and sent to eight loudspeakers. The first sound station is operated by HOUSE, in keeping with her character which, as a modern house, is partially electronic.² In terms of HOUSE as a character, Sound Station One can be conceptually connected to HOUSE by thinking of it as 'all the switches in a modern house'. In such a model, sound becomes the electrical current to which all the switches are connected. At Sound Station One, there is a microphone, a signal processor, a tape deck and a small mixing console. Each of these devices is operated by HOUSE. From Sound Station One come two signal lines, which are sent to Sound Station Two. Sound Station Two contains a microphone, signal processor, tape deck, EQ and a mixer with eight outputs for distributing the sound to eight different loudspeakers. It also contains the pitch to voltage converters for 'house lighting'³ and whatever amplifiers are needed for the PA

² Obviously, with electricity and the large number of home appliances in homes, any contemporary house iprovide an electronic environment.

³ In order for HOUSE's soundings to control some of the lights, mechanisms usually used for disco lights are employed. These are frequency to voltage convertors attached to switches which activate lights when certain frequencies are detected. In the

system.⁴ The feedback system to enhance the room resonances, using additional microphones and embellished through signal processing and EQ, is also controlled from Sound Station Two.

SIGNAL PROCESSING OF TEXT VOCALIZATIONS AND VOKIAMS

All sound made by HOUSE, text, vocalizations and vokiams, passes through an SPX 900 (or 1000) Multi-effect Processor. This digital signal processor is a "reverberation and effects system which offers...simulations of natural reverberation and early reflections, delay and echo effects, modulation effects"⁵, as well as providing harmonization, sampling, EQ and filtering.

In a signal processor such as the SPX 900, a number of different options are available. Various reverberation rates simulate different sized rooms (from large caverns and cathedrals with lengthy reverberation times, to artificial reverberation constructs which model imaginary spaces). Multiple stereo echoes can be added. Pitches can be added to the voice which are related intervallically to lower or raise the pitch of the voice, or present it as chords; the most well known example of this is Laurie Anderson speaking in a deep

disco case, this system has probably been experienced by many through the 'pulsing red light to the bass beat'. With electroacoustic music however, such obvious relationships can be avoided through the often complex rhythmic and spectral nature of the music, as well as through subtle choice of colour in the lights themselves. The result can be a wonderful sense of synchronicity between the lights and the music/sound.

⁴ For each pair of speakers, one stereo amplifier is needed.

⁵ SPX 900 Manual. Yamaha Corporation. 1989.

man's voice.⁶ In addition, the timbre of the voice can be changed through equalization to make the voice sound brighter or duller, more raspy or fuller.

In deciding how to process the voice of HOUSE, a number of factors had to be considered. The first was what could be considered as a tradeoff between degree of modification and intelligibility of text. With signal processors such as this one, it is easy and tempting to modify a piece of text until it is an abstract sound. But if this is done, then the meaning of the words is lost. Fortunately, at the mixing level, one can compensate for this by assigning the processed sound to a different set of speakers than the original signal, or by carefully adjusting the levels of the two so that the original signal is louder and the processed signal is heard as a kind of background accompaniment.

The addition of signal processing to an actor's voice is a little like adding an aural adjustment.⁷ For an actor, two things happen when the voice is modified electroacoustically. Firstly, she hears her disembodied voice coming back to her from another source. Secondly, she hears her disembodied voice modified sometimes to the degree of unintelligibility. Fortunately however, because the signal

⁶ Laurie Anderson. *United States*, parts 1-4. 1984

⁷ Adjustment is an acting technique for delivering text 'as if you were a president, travelling salesman, lover, etc'. With a mental construct such as this to inform the delivery of the text, the effect can vary considerably from adjustment to adjustment. Translating this idea to signal processing, adjustments such as delay can be thought of as distance. Or pitch change can be thought of as an adjustment of gender.

processing is controlled by the character herself, modifying the voice thus can be integrated into directorial concepts (see Appendix).

METHODS OF PROCESSING

There are of course, many obvious solutions which can be used to inform the choice of processing. The use of echo supports the idea of distance. Long reverberation times support the notion of being in a large space. Changing the pitch of the voice can support or alter the idea of gender. Equalization can support the notion of the voice squeezed through technology (for example a narrow bandwidth can be used to give the idea of a voice through a telephone); Fundamental to the inclusion of text modification is the necessity for text to be written that is suitable for processing, both in terms of content and form. The actor also must have the option of modifying the signal processing (according to specific rules if necessary) as a result of the immediate experience of hearing the voice modified and altered.⁸ Because live performance, by definition, is different for every show, this means that the relationship of the text to the processing must be specified in such a way that it is flexible enough to allow the possibility of change from performance to performance.

As can be seen in the Appendix, a number of different signal processing types have been described, along with methods for including them in electroacoustic voice production. These can be

⁸ In other words, the signal processor becomes an extension of her voice, which she can then manipulate in any way she chooses.

broken down into the areas of pitch change (which includes chorsing and harmonisation), timbre change (which includes modulation, phasing, flanging and EQ), and situation change (which includes the addition of repetition, spatial relocation and change of reverberation).

LIVE MIXING

In order to combine live performance, tape music and other electroacoustic sounds (such as processed voice), it is necessary to mix and diffuse the signals live, in order to subtly vary the tape elements and thus mirror the variations in live performance. In addition to mixing together the various incoming signals mentioned above, tape music is doubly mixed. Whenever tape music is called for, it is actually required that either two copies of tapes are played simultaneously, or two differing tape segments are played and live mixed together in order to reflect the variations in the performance.

LIVE MIXING OF TAPES

Double tapes are required in *WOMAN AND HOUSE* to add variability to the tape music. Any theatre show varies from night to night because the performers are human, and the situation changes for them from performance to performance. But if the tape remains the same, a static element is introduced, because playing back a single tape allows the music to mirror the variability only in terms of level and panning. Two tapes allow much more variability. For example, if

the two tapes are the same, starting them at slightly different times allows for variations such as phasing, flanging and, (if the delay is long enough) a sense of canon, all of which give a psychological effect of increased tension. When the two tapes are of differing material, then of course the addition (and subtraction) of other voices is possible as well. Double tapes require that the material is composed in such a way that it works well both with itself (after varying time delays), and with other sections of tape. In the case with the SONGS OF HOUSE, all the granulated material is based on harmonics of the sixty cycle hum, so all the sections work harmonically with each other. In addition, because the tempos are constantly moving in all the sections, that fact in itself seems to rhythmically cement the sections together.⁹ As can be seen from the Appendix, tapes are mixed according to relationships set up with the characters, that are both predetermined in rehearsal, and subject to variation in performance.¹⁰

DIFFUSION

Diffusion is the art of sending audio signals to a number of speakers around the room, thus giving the effect of the moving sound. In

⁹ The curious thing about tempos that are continually moving is that, sooner or later, they will become in sync with each other, either directly, or in multiples of one another. Those sync points become points of reference and cohesively seem to hold the layers together.

¹⁰ As an example, on page 13 of the script, HOUSE sings The Wailing after MOTHER says 'then I went away'. Since there is only one name called up this is obviously a case for a double Wailing. The situation in which the Wailing is called, represents intense grief at the loss of the MOTHER. The director may suggest that the tape is used to play an opposite (suggest opposite emotions to the prime one for depth of situation). Thus the tapes may be played separated by a short delay (Eg 1 sec), with continuously crossing levels at a specific pulse and with pulsed panning at a multiple of the main pulse. These three variations on mixing would tend to make the Wailing more lively and thus more an opposite to the real emotional state of the moment.

general, diffusing sound requires a minimum of six speakers each of which can be independently controlled. More elaborate diffusion systems require a large space and many more speakers.

Within diffusion systems, there are two main considerations. The first is how the stereo pair (in this case) will be physically placed in the room. The second is that each stereo pair should be matching speakers, even if, from speaker to speaker, the pairs are different.

With a multiple speaker system, speakers can be assigned to certain functions. For example, with live signal processing, rear speakers can be used for the processed signal and front speakers for the original signal. If the rear speakers have echo on them, for example, one gets the sense of the sound moving from back to front in a continuous cycle.

HOME APPLIANCE SOUND SYSTEMS

The sound system for the home appliance songs differs markedly from the main sound system. Each home appliance that is used as a prop, also has built into it a portable sound system (based on ghetto blaster technology). Thus the actor turns on and off the songs (which are looped on the tape). The poor quality of the reproductive technology is deliberate here, since the home appliances are 'lo-fi' electronic sounds.

For further information on mixing, signal processing and 'tuning the room' see the Appendix.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEATRE, STORYTELLING AND RITUAL IN THE WORLD OF WOMAN AND HOUSE

Chapter One introduces WOMAN AND HOUSE by describing it as a sacred work that combines elements of music, theatre, story-telling and ritual. It also suggests that the work is not easily categorized, because it falls neither into one or other media completely. In Chapter One, the non-musical elements - theatre, storytelling and ritual - were described as the 'cultural context' in which the music functioned. Chapter's Two and Three describe the musical elements of the work. This chapter elaborates upon theatre, storytelling and ritual with a particular emphasis on theatre, within the context of the work as a whole.

WOMAN AND HOUSE AS PERFORMANCE

Contemporary performance practice over the last thirty years has been subject to every sort of variation possible.¹ As a result, the act of labelling forms of performance has become something of a past-time for artists and critics alike. Performance works have been called multimedia events, happenings, intermedia, interdisciplinary work, avant garde performance, or have been described by prefixing the

¹ Goldberg, Rosalee (1977) *Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present*. Harry N. Abrams Inc. N.Y.

adjective 'experimental' to various traditional forms - music, theatre or performance. Performance art is the current catchword for this sort of intermedia activity. As Laurie Anderson so aptly puts it, "you call it performance art when you don't know what else to call it."² For her, that is the end of the discussion. For the critic however, and for the artist (unless he/she is a very free soul³) some reference to the artistic traditions that have informed the work is necessary if only to clarify it through discussion of artistic precedents that have informed its creation. It is within this context that I now discuss the theatrical elements of WOMAN AND HOUSE.

WHAT IS THEATRE?

To come up with a definition of theatre is no easy task, although initially it seems obvious 'what theatre is', or at least what its obvious elements are. From a city-based, English language point of view, we usually learn about theatre from scripts of the 'great masters'. Shakespeare is almost always mentioned.⁴ From the scripts we learn that there are characters, text, action, and conflict which is usually resolved by the end of the play. If the script is produced as a play, then we learn about elements of production - the director, actors, staging, lighting, sound, costumes, technical crew and production crew. Studying the history of theatre informs us further.

² Laurie Anderson. (1981) in *The Art of Performance*. p 256. Gregory Battcock. (ed.) E. P Dutton Inc. N.Y.

³ Laurie Anderson is such an example. She was trained in visual art but prefers to work in performance art, a cross disciplinary tendency that is common to many performance artists.

Western theatrical traditions have their origins in Athens of the fourth and fifth century B.C. in the works of such playwrights as Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes.⁵ In turn, their ideas were derived from religious festivals, held each year in spring to celebrate Dionysus "God of wine, youth and fertility - mythic spirit of energy, violence and action"⁶ Much of this celebration took place in the form of dance, music, mask and ritual.

A cursory look at the theatre of non-western traditions shows us that in Africa, Oceania, India and China too, "the first records of dramatic art are to be traced in the context of religious observances"⁷ taking the primary form of dance-drama - dance, music, mask and gesture. - Thus the origins of theatre - religion, ritual, dance, mask and festival - can be included, if we are to be respectful of traditions, in our list of 'the elements of theatre'.

A more contemporary look at theatre practice through surveying American 'experimental theatre' introduces environmental theatre⁷ which often includes audience participation, and the 'self as content'⁸ as well as the formalistic practices of such artists as Robert Wilson.⁹

⁴ Wickham, Glynne. (1985). *A History of the Theatre*. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.

⁵ *Ibid* p 31

⁶ *Ibid*. p 21

⁷ Shank, Theodore. (1982). *American Alternative Theatre*. MacMillan Press. London. Chapter four, p 91.

⁸ *Ibid*, p 31.

⁹ *Ibid*, p 21.

These extensions enable us to so far expand our list of the elements of theatre, that it hardly becomes a definition at all, but is rather a list of all the things theatre has been in all the pasts of many cultures of the earth. One could even expand the notion of theatre to non-human forms by looking at say, the communicative dance of bees, the abstract patterning of the behaviour of ants, or the geological ages of the earth, postulating audiences ranging from biologists to God. But if we did so, we would find that the elements of theatre are as limitless as the imagination itself, and that the only constant in all of this is that theatre is an 'extraordinary reality' above and beyond day to day experience, that is encapsulated in a reduced time frame, that takes place in a reduced space frame, and that is for 'a named other' be that an audience, 'the self', ritual celebrants or Gods and Goddesses.

WOMAN AND HOUSE encapsulates the 'extraordinary reality' of a woman's spirituality in both its presence and its absence. The absence of spirituality presents itself in the form of the compulsive housewife Perusha, who is meeting with her mother the bag lady, for the first time in twelve years, to a secular 'play-going' audience as 'other'. The presence of the spirituality offers itself as Jana, the priestess initiate, whose task it is to enlighten the 'other', in this case an ancient temple full of strangers, in order to attain full priestesshood status to 'the Great Mother'.¹¹ The reduced time-frame in this work is slightly larger than most, 7000 years, even though the

¹¹ Stone, Merlin. (1976). *The Paradise Papers. The Suppression of Woman's Rites*. Virago Press.

experience of it takes a little over an hour as it flips between presence (Sumeria approximately 5000 BC), and absence (contemporary North America.) The reduced space frame in which the extraordinary reality takes place for 'an other' who are simultaneously strangers in an ancient temple and secular audience members in a contemporary city theatre, is a neutral performing space which is configured 'in the round'.

It is possible, within the concept of theatre as an 'extraordinary reality' in an encapsulated time/space frame for a named 'other', to elaborate on it from some of the elements listed above in the discussion of the nature of theatre. The rest of this chapter will discuss in detail the following elements: story, form, characters, ritual and storytelling.

STORY

In a sense, the story of WOMAN AND HOUSE is the story of one woman attaining wholeness/oneness through the intervention of magical and ancestral forces. PERUSHA is a young, urban housewife whose reality has been skewed by a number of very serious betrayals early on in her life. In response to these betrayals, she takes comfort in an obsessive relationship with her material possessions, particularly her home appliances and her house, which she cleans compulsively. Although Perusha is not consciously aware of her shortcomings and thus has no desire to change her life, she is still subject to the influence of magical and ancestral forces, in the

form of HOUSE and JANA. It is as though PERUSHA's lack of wholeness has created a sort of vacuum, into which the sacred forces are drawn. Once present, they are able to enact their own journeys to heal PERUSHA.

JANA, as the priestess initiate, is somewhat like the sacred ancestral memories of PERUSHA. HOUSE is akin to a spirit entity embodied in the actual house PERUSHA lives in, whose acquisition of sound, language and song runs parallel to PERUSHA's attainment of wholeness. MOTHER, who is simultaneously the dispossessed bag lady, and the returning 'GREAT MOTHER', is at the centre of the series of betrayals that have affected PERUSHA. In her return as the bag lady, and in the subsequent discovery of the complex net of betrayals that have affected them both, she clears the path to the sacred feminine, both for PERUSHA and herself.

FORM

WOMAN AND HOUSE is formally divided into two sections, both of which have simultaneity as a major structural device.¹² Section One, the Prologue, is simultaneously an invitation to the audience to enter the main performing space and a symbolic rendition of the life and function of a JANA priestess in Sumeria, 5000 BC. In the Prologue, JANA begins her initiation ceremony, in order for her to obtain

¹² The idea of simultaneity as a structural device has for me its origins in music, where two or more simultaneous lines can be heard and understood. Simultaneity is also an underlying structural principle in some performance events such as 'happenings' (Kaprow) and environmental theatre events (Scheckner).

priestesshood status to MOTHER who herself is the 'first Goddess'¹³ and a deity of great power. HOUSE is TEMPLE, a sounding entity who supports and reinforces JANA's ceremony through repeating and echoing her various sounds and actions.

Section Two, which is the main body of the work, takes place simultaneously on three levels. Level One, which is the most obvious, consists of two monologues, one each by PERUSHA and MOTHER revealing their sense of betrayal, and a subsequent lengthy dialogue between the two which reveals the nature of the betrayals. At the end of the sections of dialogue, PERUSHA allows MOTHER to stay with her. Within Level One, both MOTHER's and PERUSHA's journeys are similar. They both seek an understanding of their betrayals, an acceptance of their sacred aspects, and an acceptance of each other.

Level Two is the sacred tea ceremony that JANA is performing for the audience who for her are the temple of strangers she must enlighten in order to attain priestesshood to THE GREAT MOTHER. The ceremony is very straightforward. It consists simply of serving tea to the audience. However, the way in which the tea is served is of paramount importance. It must be done with such beauty, clarity and economy of movement that the strangers are moved to speak with each other (even though they may speak different languages) about the ceremony and thus achieve a kind of communal state of awareness which will carry them forward into the future. The beauty

¹³ Stone, Merlin. (1972) *When God was a Woman*. Virago Press, London.

of the tea ceremony in the sacred world of JANA is contrasted with the clumsy and awkward way in which PERUSHA serves tea to MOTHER.

The third level is the journey of HOUSE. HOUSE is in a sense summoned unwittingly by PERUSHA through her lack of the sacred. Being unprepared, HOUSE must learn to sound, speak and finally sing in order to act as the spiritual midwife who assists (synchronistically rather than causally) JANA in being born to PERUSHA and thus becoming whole. HOUSE does not enter into dialogue with PERUSHA or MOTHER although she reacts to JANA. Instead, she sings and tells two stories simultaneously with the actions and dialogue of PERUSHA and MOTHER. The second story she tells has its climax at the very moment PERUSHA enters psychic labour for her JANA consciousness (indicated by the dropping of the cake) after which HOUSE acquires song, a synchronistic act which is both the climax of HOUSE's journey and the birth of JANA consciousness in PERUSHA.

A linear structural device is also included in the script, as an aid to the director and actors as much as a formal element. These are sections, labelled A to F, and are somewhat like acts or scenes in that they break the work into linear segments.

THE CHARACTERS

There are four characters in WOMAN AND HOUSE, although two of them, JANA and PERUSHA are played by the same actress.

HOUSE

A singing, talking house was posited as a being that had memories, ancestry, thoughts and ideas as well as relationships with anything she could hear or feel - people as well as machines. HOUSE has a body, but not a body in the usual sense. It is large, doesn't move, and can only interact with others through the senses of hearing and touch. HOUSE is very cognizant of her memories, particularly of her mother's house, the house that used to stand where she stands now. She is also aware of her sacred side, TEMPLE, which is activated through the priestess JANA. The embodiment of HOUSE by an actress is emblematic of the spirit of HOUSE, which is in a sense called into being by the absence of the sacred in PERUSHA.

The journey of HOUSE, from the beginning to the end of the work, takes place through the acquisition of sound, language and song. As HOUSE gains song, so PERUSHA gains her sacred self. HOUSE's relationship with MOTHER and PERUSHA however, is curious. They are barely cognizant of her. PERUSHA denies HOUSE's existence completely, except at the very end. MOTHER is vaguely aware of a past in which houses featured strongly, but this memory has been

mostly erased through electroshock treatment and tends to 'come and go' throughout the work. Even more curiously, after both MOTHER and PERUSHA become aware of HOUSE, and sing with her, HOUSE leaves. In this sense, she is like a being one is always dimly aware of, but who can be seen only out of the corner of the eyes. When faced directly, or in this case when sung with overtly, the being leaves. What she leaves them with however, is their true selves, and in this sense HOUSE is somewhat akin to a spiritual midwife who assists in birthing the JANA consciousness in PERUSHA, and in returning the sacred MOTHER to the daughter.

PERUSHA

Inside HOUSE lives PERUSHA, an obsessive/compulsive housewife who cleans frantically and is comforted primarily by her home appliances. The home appliances, TV, Coffee Machine and Vacuum Cleaner are used often, and sing their simple songs whenever they are switched on. PERUSHA values above all her material possessions. What little self she has is bound in servitude to her objects. For PERUSHA the day in which WOMAN AND HOUSE takes place is an extraordinary one. We learn that she has not seen her mother for sixteen years, and that this day she is meeting with her to have tea. She is not aware of her mother's state, which is currently that of a bag lady. Her memory of her mother is coloured by her mother's disappearance into a psychiatric hospital shortly after a complex series of familial betrayals. PERUSHA is not initially aware of the other character she plays, JANA, although in a sense she is

unknowingly pregnant with JANA. Neither is she aware of HOUSE, who sings and speaks to her. Her dropping of the cake marks her entry into psychic labour, when she hears HOUSE, her spiritual midwife, for the first time. Finally, through the help of both HOUSE and MOTHER, she gives birth to her JANA consciousness and in doing so becomes whole. She is thus able to accept MOTHER back into her home.

JANA

JANA, who is played by the same actress who plays PERUSHA, is a Sumerian Priestess initiate involved in an ancient ceremony to attain priestesshood to the GREAT MOTHER. The initiation ceremony takes the form of a sacred tea ceremony which she does for the audience who are, for her, strangers in the ancient temple. JANA and PERUSHA alternate throughout the work, with JANA completing her tea ceremony just before she is born to PERUSHA.

MOTHER

MOTHER is PERUSHA'S actual mother who has become a bag lady after psychiatric treatment and release from psychiatric hospitalization, and who has not seen her daughter for twelve years. She enters HOUSE to see PERUSHA. Prior to MOTHER's treatment, she had a rich and complex sacred relationship with the world, including her own house. However, MOTHER was essentially abandoned in a psychiatric hospital by her husband because he could not live with

her and her sacred feminine relationship with the world. MOTHER was given assorted psychiatric treatments (including electroshock therapy), and finally let loose to be a bag lady. She has been given her daughter's address by her ex-husband, from whom she has begged money in the street, and has ostensibly come to visit Perusha to ask her if she can move in with her and her family.

RITUAL

Ritual exists on two levels in WOMAN AND HOUSE. Most obviously, ritual occurs in the tea ceremony. As mentioned above, JANA must serve tea to the audience with beauty, stillness and clarity in order to obtain the status of priestess to the GREAT MOTHER. The idea of the tea ceremony was taken from the Japanese ceremony¹⁴ and applied to a situation believed to have taken place in Sumeria in approximately 5000 BC. The sacred tea ceremony, which took place in the temples of priestesses on the ninth full moon after the winter solstice, was the only time strangers were invited into the temple. At all other times, strangers in any of the small villages of the area were outcasts because they were believed to be dangerous. They were invited into the temple partly for their own edification, and partly for the the purpose of the tea ceremony, which was an initiation or test of the priestess' powers of enlightenment. If she succeeded, through the magnificence of her tea ceremony performance, to enlighten the strangers to the degree that they were able to

¹⁴ Kakuzo, Okakura. (1956) *The book of Tea*. Tuttle Co inc. Toyko.

communicate with each other even though they spoke different languages, she would attain priestesshood to the GREAT MOTHER, the primary deity of the day. Within the context of the WOMAN AND HOUSE, JANA's performance goal is exactly that of the historical figure. She must enlighten the strangers (the audience) through the excellence of her tea ceremony, so that the audience members should feel, in their interaction with JANA, that they are participating in a sacred rite. It is in this aspect of the work that the relationship between the actor, character and audience is at its most complex. The character, JANA, seeks to spiritually enlighten a group of strangers who are also the audience. For the character JANA to do this however, she must not be 'acting' but must be herself in a state of true meditative awareness in order to perform the tea ceremony in the proper way. In this state, her relationship with the audience will be very different from her relationship with them as a character, when she plays PERUSHA. The attention to the relationship between actor and character is further developed in the rituals that are part of the rehearsal process. Within the work WOMAN AND HOUSE the acceptance of the sacred feminine is the major act of transformation for the characters. For the actors too, some transformation is also required, although it may not be as profound as that of PERUSHA. Because of this, a number of ritualistic practices are incorporated into the rehearsal process itself.¹⁵

¹⁵ Sonic meditations, prayer and various forms of psycho-spiritual exercises are used throughout the rehearsal process. See appendix.

STORYTELLING

HOUSE tells two stories during the work. In a sense, she tells them to whoever is listening. PERUSHA does not hear the stories, although she becomes increasingly aware of 'something' during the process of the work until she finally hears the songs of HOUSE. MOTHER hears snippets of the stories only. Before she had her electroshock treatment, she was well aware of the kinds of stories HOUSE tells, but now she is only occasionally aware of fragments of them and in this sense, her attention comes and goes. The audience/strangers are of course very aware of HOUSE's stories, although the beginning of the second story which overlaps the end of the last section of dialogue between PERUSHA and MOTHER may not be initially appreciated as such. The first story HOUSE tells is her memory of when she was a tree. In telling this story, she invokes the idea of a continuous consciousness that is independent of its material form. In this story, she also introduces her own mother, which is the house that stood in her place before her. Mother-house was destroyed in a great catastrophe, and how that catastrophe came about is the subject of the second story.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

In creating WOMAN AND HOUSE, I have attempted to create a performance by incorporating elements of ritual, theatre and story-telling to investigate some sacred and non-sacred aspects of woman's experience and provide a context for music and sound reflecting those experiences. Writing this detailed description of the piece has enabled me to further contemplate both the work itself and the idea of integrating music, ritual, storytelling and theatre within the context of female experience.

One notable aspect of WOMAN AND HOUSE is that it is difficult to describe what kind of work it is without discussing what it is not! Thus WOMAN AND HOUSE is probably best described as performance art, because that is the only definition broad and encompassing enough to include it! However, even performance art is not exactly an appropriate definition because works that fall into that category are usually performed by the creators, and in this case, I am not the performer.

Another noticeable aspect of the work is that it is performed only by women, and that it reveals a great deal about some of the more painful layers of female experience. The work originates from a personal place, both in my own experience and in the experiences of other women I know. It is motivated at least partially by a desire for self knowledge (which includes an investigation of gender-determined knowledge and experience, both potential and

realised), as well as a desire to explore imaginative limits and boundaries, through multilayering and crossing forms.

In the multilayered and multifaceted reality of *WOMAN AND HOUSE* lie both the strengths and the weaknesses of the work. The layered quality gives it a complexity of focus and alludes to similar complexities in the real world. But the layering is also a potential weakness. In terms of construction, it is difficult to give each of the layers enough value to make them interesting in themselves, and to interlace and intersect the layers in a formally suitable way. In terms of production, the directorial task is complex because it is a question of multiple focus. The director must know when the focus is direct, indirect, or multifocused, and is further challenged through the making of transitions from one form of focus to the other.

For me however, finally, the real value of the work, can be summed up in the following paragraph by Cixous¹

"By writing herself, woman will return to the body which has been more than confiscated from her, which has been turned into the uncanny stranger on display - the ailing or dead figure, which so often turns out to be the nasty companion, the cause and location of inhibitions. Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time. Write yourself. Your body must be heard."

¹ Cixous, Hélène. "The Laugh of the Medusa" in Marks and de Courtivron. *The New French Feminisms*.

APPENDIX ONE

CONTENTS

Script.

Lighting.

Rehearsal schedule.

Vocal work.

Sonic Meditation One.

Sonic Meditation Two.

Rhythm Exercise.

Glissando Exercise.

Imitation/Deviation Exercise.

Scorpt 1.

Scorpt 2.

Scorpt 3.

Vokiam 1.

Vokiam 2.

Vokiam 3.

Vokiam 4.

Vokiam 5.

Chanting.

Electroacoustic music.

Tuning the Space.

The Physical Setup.

Signal Processing of Text, Vocalizations and Vokiams.

Live Mixing of Tapes.

Diffusion.

Home Appliance Sound Systems.

Costume.

WOMAN AND HOUSE

WOMAN AND HOUSE is a performance work for three actresses, one of whom sings and is wired for sound and light. Vocalizations, tape music and digital signal processing of the voice of House are an integral part of the work. Although WOMAN AND HOUSE on the initial reading of the script looks a bit like a play, the inclusion of so much sound and music, as well as the inclusion of ritual and storytelling, make it more like performance art. My favourite definition of WOMAN AND HOUSE is that it is an imaginary world complete with characters, that simultaneously presents an aspect of woman's spirituality in both its absence and its presence, using music, theatre, ritual and story telling.

WOMAN AND HOUSE is divided into two sections, the Prologue and the body of the work.

THE MUSIC

There are five types of music. Types One and Two are tape music. Type One, THE SONGS OF THE HOUSE, are indicated by their names; THE DESCENDING, THE SCATTERING, THE WAILING, THE CONTINUOUS, THE ASCENDING FRAGMENTED, THE CLOUDY DESCENT, THE CONTINUUM. These are turned on and off by HOUSE, as well as by the sound operator. The second type of music consists of THE SONGS OF THE HOME APPLIANCES and are indicated by their names: TV SONG,

VACUUM CLEANER SONG, COFFEE MACHINE SONG. These songs are activated by the actors through special switches hidden in the home appliances, which also contain small sound systems to play back the tapes. The first two types of music are composed using Granular Synthesis. The third type of 'music' is the live signal processor added to HOUSE's vocalizations and speech, used to give delays to the voice, change the pitch, add colour and generally alter the voice of house in a variety of electronic ways. The signal processor is operated by HOUSE as part of her character. The fourth type of music includes different kinds of vocalizations; chants and hums that the JANA priestess sings during her ceremony, emotional cries and other sounds from Mother, and the use of text repetition mainly from Perusha.

The fifth type is a song sung by HOUSE at the climax of the work, which is called a Vokiam, and which is lead up to sonically from about half way through the work. (Fragments of the Vokiam are indicated in the script by Vokiam 1,2....5) In addition to the sounds, songs and vocalizations presented in the work itself, there are a number of different sound exercises and rituals that must take place during the rehearsal of the work. See music notes for more detail.

THE CHARACTERS

PERUSHA/JANA initiate. In the Prologue, this character is JANA, the priestess about to perform her own initiation ceremony. For the remainder of the work she flips between two personas, the obsessive housewife PERUSHA, who is meeting her mother for the

first time in sixteen years, and a JANA initiate who is performing the ritual of an ancient Sumerian Tea Ceremony for the audience in order to enlighten them, and attain the sacred state of JANA priestess. For clarity's sake, when she is performing as the housewife she is called PERUSHA. When she is performing as the JANA initiate, she is called JANA. As JANA, she speaks only once, but sings and chants continually. As PERUSHA, her speech is very repetitive and she never sounds or sings. The only songs she hears are those of the home appliances.

MOTHER PERUSHA's mother. Only in the Prologue, is she 'The Great Mother'. In the body of the work, she is a homeless bag lady and has not been in contact with her daughter for twelve years. Most of that time she has been in a psychiatric institution. For the last couple of years she has been living on the street. With the exception of her text, Mother's soundings are wailings, chantings and keenings and come from a deep psychic wounding from an act of betrayal.

HOUSE is the singer/storyteller and is in fact the house that Perusha lives in. In the Prologue only, she is the Temple. In the body of the work, she is a on-stage female presence wired for sound and light, who remains in one spot by her sound desk until the very end, and whose voice is processed through a digital signal processor. She sings mainly by turning the tape recorder on (see music notes), except at the the climax of the work, when she sings her own 'song'. HOUSE is mute until provoked by PERUSHA and her home appliances to the degree that she relearns to sound, speak and finally sing. She is

helped in finding her voice by her own mother, an old stone house that used to stand where HOUSE stands now. I like to think of her as having only the senses of hearing and touch, and having the quality of immobility which permeates all of her actions, songs and sounds.

TELEVISION, COFFEE MACHINE, VACUUM CLEANER. Although these characters appear as props, it is PERUSHA's intense relationship with them that makes them more like characters. However, I like to think of them as low level, low intelligence characters represented mainly as sound, who sing their songs to PERUSHA, and who express their personas through their physical relationship with PERUSHA. In each of them, they have hidden a small sound system. The 'songs' of the home appliances are activated by the actors through a hidden switch.

THE SET WOMAN and HOUSE is set on an open-thrust stage with the audience on stage. Set and props are minimal. A round table required for the tea pot and cups as part of the tea ceremony, should lend itself to ritual. Another round table with two high stools too high for the table defines the living-room, dining room kitchen area. A third table is HOUSE's sound station, which holds sound devices, a tape recorder, signal processor etc. The home appliances, Coffee machine, TV, Vacuum Cleaner, are scattered around the room and are collected by Perusha in her first appearance inside the inner performance area.

THE COSTUMES The JANA/PERUSHA costume is a garment particularly designed to emphasize the priestess when worn in one way, and the housewife when worn in another.

THE LIGHTS There are three distinct types of lighting set-ups. Two are used alternately to distinguish PERUSHA the housewife, from the JANA initiate. HOUSE is also wired to a lighting system that responds to the frequencies of her voice/songs (see notes).

SECTION A

PROLOGUE

The audience is waiting at the door at showtime. HOUSE as TEMPLE is standing on two boxes, one leg on each, and the audience must pass through her legs in order to enter the space. MOTHER is upstage centre in the GREAT MOTHER mask. THE DESCENDING is heard. The audience seat themselves. At the back of the audience is JANA with a bowl of water. GREAT MOTHER beckons her and she comes down onto the stage and anoints great mother's hands. GREAT MOTHER then beckons to TEMPLE whose voice is drawn out of her. Temple gets down from the boxes and walks around the audience singing VOKIAM 5.

Temple sings REACTIVE MUSIC on underlined text. (Scorpt one).

MOTHER (amplified, prerecorded voice)

There is an ancient initiation ceremony from Sumeria called JANA in which a priestess opens her temple to strangers who were normally forbidden entry. The purpose of the ceremony is twofold.

Firstly, it exists to offer profound spiritual nourishment to people whose lives are often in danger simply because they are outsiders.

Secondly, it is a rite of passage for the priestess who becomes a community leader if she is successful in her nourishment of the strangers. Jana takes place on the ninth full moon after the winter solstice. The offering of tea is accompanied by special songs that

activate resonances in the temple so well that the ceremony is sometimes referred only as 'Temple Singing Tea'. The priestess, who is required to keep silent for twelve years before she performs the ceremony, often effects dramatic change on the outsiders. Some of them are able to communicate with frankness and with ease, even though they speak different languages. Some are so overcome with feelings of goodwill and kindness, that they put their lives into the service of others. The Priestess herself becomes a community member only if she can effect change through serving tea with stillness, beauty and clarity.

GREAT MOTHER takes JANA's throat and coaxes sound out of her, which takes the form of a great wail.

TEMPLE moves slowly to her station and dons the headset microphone.

GREAT MOTHER moves to the back of the audience and changes to MOTHER the bag lady, unseen by the audience.

SECTION B.

JANA

I will prepare you tea.

JANA begins to make tea. In the process, she plugs in the kettle. The instant she does so, she transforms to PERUSHA.

PERUSHA rushes about in a fit of compulsive behaviour. Finally she finds the list she has been looking for.

PERUSHA. Yes. Meeting with mother. Clean. Prepare afternoon tea. Tea with my mother.

There is a knock at the door. PERUSHA responds by trying out a number of imaginary greetings on her mother.

PERUSHA. Mother! Come in! You look just the same. My mother! Let me take your coat!

I wasn't expecting you mother. Oh. Now? Yes!

Hello Mother! I'm so pleased to see you.! You look wonderful! What happened!

Mother, I never asked you to come! No!

Oh. Hello. Yes. Come in. Sit down. Tea?

What sort of tea? Earl Grey? English Breakfast? Russian Caravan? Cake? What sort of cake? Black Forest Cake? (*PERUSHA whips cream for the cake and starts stuffing some of the cream in her mouth*)

Black Forest Cake! I wasn't expecting you mother!

Clean. This house is always filthy. Always filthy. Always cleaning. Before they come. After they go. Never any gratitude. All I ever do is vacuum.

PERUSHA turns on vacuum cleaner. VACUUM CLEANER SONG. Yells the following over the top of sounds.

PERUSHA. You look different mother. I remember you differently. No, I didn't come to see you. Dad said you didn't want us to. He said, stay away. Wait till she's better. (*Perusha turns off Vacuum Cleaner*) I wanted to see you. I waited. Once I went to the hospital. The nurses told me I couldn't see you. I caught the bus home.

There is a knock at the door. Instead of opening, she goes over to the TV and turns it on. TV SONG. She watches TV for a while. Another knock at the door. She notices that the kettle is boiling. She goes to unplug the kettle and transforms to JANA.

JANA: I will prepare you tea.

She chants and begins elaborate tea ceremony preparations. After some time, there is another knock on the door. She transforms back to Perusha. She goes to the coffee machine. She turns it on. COFFEE MACHINE SONG.

PERUSHA. Do you like the house. Twelve years we been here. I've always tried to keep it nice. If only people would wipe their feet. Stop spilling things. I'm always cleaning up after them.

PERUSHA turns off coffee machine. She takes a cup of coffee and begins to drink it.

PERUSHA. Dad said stay away. She's ill. It'll only make things worse. Wait. Stay away. I wanted you. But I stayed away. I waited.

PERUSHA waits for a long time in silence. The knocking begins again. PERUSHA puts down her coffee and goes to put away the vacuum cleaner.

MOTHER has descended from half way down the stairs. She calls out

MOTHER. Hello Perusha.

Mother continues coming down the stairs She is a bag lady. She puts her shopping bags down and looks around, The following speech takes place as she moves out of the audience onto the performing area.

HOUSE recognizes MOTHER and is horrified. She turns on THE WAILING and vocalizes. (Scorpt 2).

MOTHER. We had a lovely house. Perusha was born in it. We talked together the house and I. And sung. Then I saw the girl. Your father was with her but she looked the same age as you. I told him, its not right. You with a girl like that. He said, there's no girl. You're crazy. Lets go and see a doctor. You talk and sing with houses. He signed something. They took me away. I said I want to see my daughter.

When you are better. They gave me a needle. I want to see my husband. When you are better. They strapped me down. They put a sponge in my mouth and told me to bite. I caught fire. Then there wasn't anything left of me. ashes. Fire and ashes. Fire then ashes. I became the moon. Full. Empty. Full. When can I see my daughter. When you're better. Empty. Full. Ashes. Fire. Sackcloth. Once I got angry. They burnt me at the stake.

HOUSE. I have a memory.

MOTHER. When you're better. When you are better you can see you family. One day they said I was better. I waited five hours at the gate for you and your father to pick me up. It got dark. I knew you would never come. That night I slept over a warm grate. Then every night. The Salvation Army is warm in the winter. Most people don't give money, but a few do. Enough do. Every day, I ask you or your father for change. It is always actually someone else. One day, your father gave me a twenty dollar bill and this address before he hurried away.

JANA transforms back to PERUSHA.

PERUSHA. Hello.

MOTHER. Hello Perusha. You have a nice house.

PERUSHA. Yes, thank you. And its so easy to keep clean.

MOTHER. Its been a long time. Where were you. I waited. I almost died waiting.

HOUSE responds to MOTHERS potential death with soundings. (see Scorpt 2)

PERUSHA. You'll live a long time yet mother. Where are you living now?

MOTHER. Over the grate at the Bay.

PERUSHA. You cant live at the Bay on a grate.

MOTHER. Where else can I live, Here?

Mother clambers awkwardly onto the high stool at the table.

PERUSHA. Ah yes. We could finish the basement. A suite for you. It would take a few months to set up.

MOTHER. I could use any room.

PERUSHA. We'd get in your way..You'd lose your independence.

MOTHER. You don't want your crazy old mother living with you.

PERUSHA. Its not that. I'd have to talk it over with Trego.

MOTHER. Trego?

PERUSHA. My husband.

MOTHER. Do you have children?

PERUSHA. Yes, two. Moshe and Maria. Look. There are their pictures.

MOTHER. Funny names. I'm a grandmother.

PERUSHA. We told them about you. You were ill not crazy.

MOTHER. No. Mad. Forest fires.

Perusha gets some towels.

MOTHER goes to give PERUSHA a hug.

PERUSHA. You had an emotional disorder. Now you're better. Do you want a bath.

MOTHER. Do I smell? I'll leave lice on your towels.

PERUSHA. I'll buy new ones.

SECTION C

PERUSHA starts to prepare afternoon tea for Mother, fiddling and fussing with the teapot and cups in quite a different manner from the way JANA works with the cups. HOUSE begins plays THE CONTINUOUS and PERUSHA transforms to JANA and serves tea to the audience. JANA chants.

HOUSE. My mother asked me to speak to you. My mother was a house. But old, 400 hundred years old. She dared me!! My mother was a house. I am a house. My mother. Fine stone mansion. Twenty-three fireplaces. 400 years old. She said they always spoke, the women and the houses. She said everything spoke. Everyone spoke. And sung. Everything sung. The ovens chattered. The tables and the chairs muttering. The fireplaces giggle. The stairs whistling. The windows hummed. Babies were born. 240 babies were born. My mother would help. Fights!! There were fights that you couldn't believe. And squabbles and quarrels and mismatches. But there was laughter and mumblings and chatterings and cryings and whisperings. When I was a tree, I spoke to the birds and the wind and the waves and the owls of course and the clouds and there were deer too we all spoke laughed sung chattered mumbled squabbled giggled cried. I cried last. Cut down. lumber. Two-by-fours. To be a house! Mother! Then she came. As I cried. She came and she said 'There there! I was a house. I lived for four hundred years. Then I was nothing. You stand in my place. You were a tree. 400 hundred

years old. Now you will be a wood house. Lucky you. I am nothing. From stately mansion to nothing in a single second. Only a ghost. Tree to house over a few months? Its a minor change. I'll tell you the story about how I became nothing one day.

JANA continues serving tea. After she has handed out all the tea on one tray, she returns to the centre and begins the ritual stacking of the tea-cups. JANA transforms to PERUSHA.

HOUSE BEGINS AMPLIFIED BREATHING.

MOTHER. Here are the towels. You'll never get rid of the lice. You'll have to throw those towels away.

PERUSHA. When are you coming again.

MOTHER. Oh. When...ever.

PERUSHA. I made tea. Its almost ready.

Mother clambers awkwardly on to the stool.

SECTION D.

During this conversation, neither Perusha or her mother hear the house speak specifically, although they are aware that some form of communication is happening.

In several cases MOTHER or PERUSHA, will continually repeat a phrase, under the other's speech. Sometimes, the characters speak at the same time. In this case a slash / indicates where the next character's line comes in.

MOTHER. Where's Edward?

Perusha doesn't answer.

MOTHER. Where's Edward? My Brother.

Perusha is about to answer when the house cuts her off.

HOUSE. My mother asked me to speak to you. My mother was a house.

Although Perusha doesn't hear house, there is a sense that house has relieved her of the emotional weight of the painful story she must reveal and so Perusha can answer and speak simply.

PERUSHA. Uncle Edward 's not here.

MOTHER. Where is he?

HOUSE. Mother said there was a time when the whole world was lively. The houses talked to the women. The trees talked to the clouds. Men and horses conversed with great animation.

MOTHER. Where is he?

PERUSHA. He went.....

HOUSE. Then something happened.

PERUSHA. I don't remember where he went.

MOTHER. When will he be back?

PERUSHA. They never told you?

HOUSE. There wasn't much talking or laughing.

MOTHER. Told me? Told me, told me (etc repeat under)

HOUSE. There wasn't much talking or laughing.

PERUSHA. They never told you. He's gone. Gone. (repeat under)

HOUSE: We grew surly and silent.

MOTHER. Where's Edward? My brother. I loved him. He loved me. He was kind to me.

PERUSHA. Not to me. Not to me, not to me, (etc repeat under)

MOTHER. He loved me inside and out. He was kind to me. Kind to me.
(repeat)

HOUSE. *(over the top of kind to me/ not to me repeat section)* Nobody was listening anymore. The men, "what do horses know? No talking. The women said, "no talking. No talking.....or singing"

MOTHER. Why? what did he do to you. How did he ever hurt you?

Perusha is about to speak when again the house interrupts.

HOUSE. Then they said, "We need more. We need more. Give us more". We couldn't believe it.

MOTHER. What did he do to you?

PERUSHA. He's gone. Gone. He made me do it.

HOUSE. We couldn't believe it. They said we need more!

PERUSHA. He made me do it.

MOTHER. Made you do what.

PERUSHA. I'd never done it before. I couldn't stop him. I tried. I told him I'd tell. He said you knew. That you asked him to do it. Afterwards he gave me flowers.

MOTHER. He gave me flowers.

HOUSE. The rain stopped drumming. The sea shivered. The stones sighed. The mountains waited. And waited (Vokiam 1) (*intersperse vokiam one in between lines until mother says 'then I went away.'*)

PERUSHA. I couldn't stop him. I tried. Afterwards /he gave me flowers.

MOTHER. He gave me flowers. What did he do. What did he do. (repeats and wails).

PERUSHA. (screams, cutting off the Vokiam and text repetition) He split me down the middle!

There is a long pause, no movement, no sound.

SECTION E.

HOUSE. (*whispers*) My mother decided to talk to the lady of the house. The horse decided to talk to the man of the house.

PERUSHA. After Edward left one day, I found dad.....with a girl...

HOUSE. But they both said,

MOTHER. Who was the girl?

HOUSE. go away. We are busy. We are happy.

PERUSHA. She was my best friend at school.

HOUSE All our lives we've worked for this

MOTHER. Your best friend at school and your father.

HOUSE. And if this is not right

MOTHER. She was the same age as you.

PERUSHA. She was my best friend at school.

HOUSE. Then this is all there is.

PERUSHA. I had told her everything.

HOUSE sings VOKIAM TWO, first time through up to phrase four with the words ;this is all there is', interspersed among spoken text, then picking text to echo using phrase five to eight.

MOTHER. It wasn't right. There's no girl, he said. Who was she?

PERUSHA. Then you went away.

MOTHER. Then I went away.

HOUSE sings THE WAILING.

LONG PAUSE.

MOTHER. Did she stay?

PERUSHA. Yes.

MOTHER. How long (did she stay). (*repeat under 'did she stay'*)

PERUSHA. She's still there.

MOTHER. Do you like her.

PERUSHA. No.

MOTHER. Your father told me you preferred her to me. Only bad mad mothers talk to houses. You needed a real mother. She'd be better at it. Better. /Listen Perusha. Listen.

HOUSE. Listen Perusha, Listen. *(then hold high note, crescendo with wails)*

THE WAILING level is boosted way up.

Mother wails too.

Finally.

MOTHER. Edward. I never told Edward to do that to you, you know. I never knew. Where is he?

Long slow fade on THE WAILING .

SECTION F.

PERUSHA. *(viciously)*. He's dead.

HOUSE chants dead, dead dead through signal processor.

Perusha starts to scratch.

MOTHER. Dead! He was kind to me! Dead!

PERUSHA. Dead!

MOTHER. Dead! You've caught them. Dead! It only takes a minute. Dead! No point getting rid of them if you sleep in the Sally Ann. You always get them again. Dead!

PERUSHA. I've got lice! I've got lice!! My beautiful house. My mother walks in and gives me lice!

THE WAILING fades out.

MOTHER. (*Cruelly laughing with this speech*) The kids will get them now. And the husband. What do you call him. Trego? Nice house. Lousey house. I'll meet my grandchildren. And give them lice.

PERUSHA. Dead! have your tea. Then you can go.

MOTHER. If I go, I'll come back tomorrow. Can I stay the night.

PERUSHA. Cake?

Mother nods.

The following takes place throughout the rest of the House's speech.

Perusha does not answer. She gets up to get the cake. It is excessively decorated. She slowly and meticulously cuts it into small pieces.

Mother is about to interrupt and ask whether she can stay the night again, when house interrupts. There is a sense that they are both speaking together, even though House is actually the only one speaking.

HOUSE. With THE CONTINUUM. (see Vokiam 4 for each asterisk) My mother decided to talk to the lady of the house once more. The horse decided to talk to the man of the house. But they both said "Go away. We are busy. We are happy." They decided to hold a fabulous party. Formal. With everyone in their finest clothes. They invited everybody they knew. It was a fine feast but we had been silenced. They presided over the great meal with grace and charm and wit. Except they had forgotten.* And we remembered.* My Mother and the Horse were angry. They called their friends. The mountains came. The sea came. All the animals. The birds and trees came. The stones came. They waited.* They watched as cake was served. They waited and watched as the guests raised their glasses in a toast. Then there was the quietest sound you ever heard.*

PERUSHA/JANA drops the cake dish. (CONTINUUM out) and it smashes into millions of little pieces, cake and crumbs and glass going everywhere.

HOUSE. Then there was nothing.* Suddenly nothing* but a layer of fine dust. Nothing.*

PERUSHA begins to clean up the mess but cuts her hand badly on a piece of broken glass. She holds her hand high to stop the bleeding although blood still continues to run down her arm. She rushes to get the vacuum cleaner.

MOTHER. This isn't like the soup kitchens!

Mother and Perusha struggle over the vacuum cleaner.

MOTHER: No! listen!

Mother touches Perusha's throat and Perusha begins to wail.

HOUSE. Yes. Listen!

House begins to sing VOKIAM 3. accompanied by the CONTINUUM.

PERUSHA hears house for the first time. She sees the audience. She transforms to JANA and chants. She serves tea to the last few members of the audience.

Mother sees JANA with tea.

MOTHER. Can I stay the night?

JANA/PERUSHA walks to the table and puts down the tea tray.

MOTHER (*finds a bandage and bandages PERUSHA's hand.*) Can I stay the night?

MOTHER. Can I stay the night?

Finally, PERUSHA returns to the table to get their tea. She offers it to her mother.

PERUSHA Tea?

MOTHER. Yes. Can I stay the night.

PERUSHA. There's something I want to ask you.

MOTHER. Yes.

PERUSHA. If you stay one night, will you ever go away again.

MOTHER. No.

PERUSHA. Yes.

PERUSHA and MOTHER drink tea together. THE DESCENDING.. is heard as HOUSE holds long high sustained note with tape.

THE END.

LIGHTING

There are three different lighting states for WOMAN AND HOUSE. States One and Two use specials to indicate when the JANA/PERUSHA character is JANA, and when she is PERUSHA. Although of course, the actual lighting design is to be left in the hands of the lighting designer, it is my intuition that softer intensities and colours be used for the JANA state, and harsher and brighter ones for PERUSHA. The third lighting state consists of lights for HOUSE, controlled via pitch to voltage converters, triggered whenever HOUSE sings, speaks, or activates her tapes or sounds in any way.

HOUSE's lights are actually disco lights, familiar to anyone who has been to a disco and experienced the red lights that 'pulse to the beat'. Fortunately, they are used more subtly in this context! This is because the complex rhythmic structures and spectral content of speech and the tape music trigger the lights on and off more subtly, an effect which can be further enhanced by the judicious choice of gel colour.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE. Music only

The following rehearsal schedule is for a three week rehearsal period. for the musical aspects of the work only. All other rehearsal work will be determined by the director.

Rehearsals begin.

Week One.

Each morning. Sound meditation. Rhythm or melody exercises. One hour.

Physical exercises with sound. One hour. Work with HOUSE on vocalizations until Scorpts and Vokiams understood..Work with MOTHER and JANA on chanting and wailing. Personal voice work with actors must take place daily.

When the vocal work is understood by HOUSE, introduce her to equipment. Work daily with HOUSE on integration of vocal work and equipment. Once we are installed in performance space, set up electroacoustic equipment. Over the next few days, fine tune equipment. Test resonating frequency of space. The following list is a description of the number of different activities required, and the approximate time required

Resonating space. Two hours.

Diffusion set up. One hour.

Songs of home appliances. One hour.

HOUSE's sound table. One hour.

One for all EA music. One hour.

Rehearsal for HOUSE and signal processor. One hour.

Rehearsal for live-mixing (house and sound person). One hour.

Special rehearsals for house and Vokiams. Two hours

Specials for HOUSE and reactive music. Two hours.

HOUSE and Drone work. One hour.

Special rehearsal for text repetition. PERUSHA/MOTHER/house. Two hours.

Special Rehearsal MOTHER. the wailings. One hour.

Special rehearsal . JANA. Chanting.

From day eight on, music integrated into general rehearsal, with special rehearsals called if need be.

VOCAL WORK.

Vocal work takes place in the following sections of the work.

- 1) In the Prologue, JANA repeats the text in a variety of ways and HOUSE as Temple sings 'Reactive Music'.
- 2) The first time PERUSHA transforms to JANA she chants.
- 3) HOUSE responds to MOTHER's mentioning of her death.
- 4) The second time PERUSHA transforms to JANA she chants.
- 5) MOTHER and PERUSHA repeat sections of dialogue throughout section D, or begin a line before the other has finished. HOUSE sounds.
- 6) HOUSE repeats 'and waited' (which is the beginning of the Vokiam).
- 7) MOTHER wails after 'what did he do' (end of section D).
- 8) HOUSE sings Vokiam 2 after 'this is all there is'.
- 9) MOTHER wails after 'listen PERUSHA listen' (end of section E).
- 10) HOUSE sings Vokiam 3 (with the CONTINUUM, section F).
- 11) HOUSE sings Vokiam 5. MOTHER and PERUSHA form accompaniment to song. MOTHER keens with her. PERUSHA alternately chants and repeats text.

In order that the actors have access to vocal material with which to improvise, a large part of the rehearsal period (at least half) must be devoted to sound work. Each rehearsal period begins with a sonic meditation and all the exercises listed under 'general exercises' must be done before other rehearsal work is done.

Sound work is of various kinds: meditative music, drones, reactive music (which includes techniques for text repetition), wailings and keenings, Vokiams. Some of these categories have their own specific exercises. In addition, there are a number of exercises that have relevance to most of the vocalizations, such as sonic meditations, and rhythm and imitation games.

SONIC MEDITATION ONE

Everybody involved in WOMAN AND HOUSE should lie in a circle, their heads towards the centre. Place your hand on the solar plexus of the person lying each side of you, which will result in each person touching four people. When all are comfortable, begin to breathe deeply but in a relaxed fashion. Once relaxed deep breathing is established, each member of the group tries to match inhalation/exhalation patterns with those of the person on each side of her. When the group is inhaling and exhaling together, each member of the group should start gently letting the breath resonate the body into sound. The first soundings will be very gentle, as if breath is gently stroking the body, and the body is responding by resonating with the tiniest touches of sound. As the body begins to

resonate more freely, the sounds will change from lower pitched ones, which are the whole body resonating, to higher pitched ones, which are smaller sections of the body resonating (e.g. the head). If these sounds become too intense for the sound-maker, one should stop sounding and concentrate on the breath, matching the breath inhalation/exhalation with partners either side, before allowing the breath to resonate into sound again. This meditation usually takes a least forty-five minutes, with at least the first ten minutes being devoted to relaxing the breathing. The meditation ends when the bodies of the group members have completely resonated, and the group is quietly breathing together.

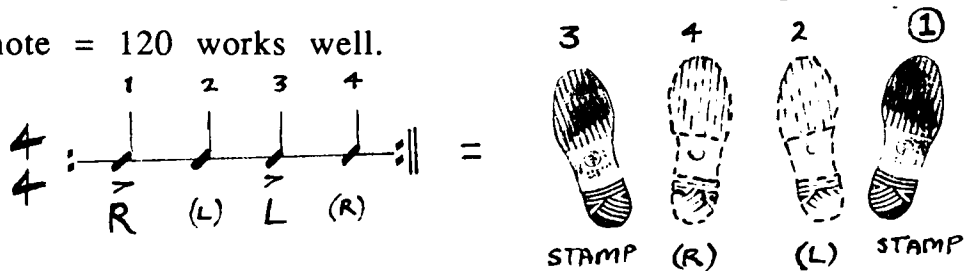
SONIC MEDITATION TWO

Begin the exercise in the same way as above. When you are all relaxed and resonating (at least 10 minutes into the piece), one person calls out their name. That person becomes the leader. From then on, each member of the group can only make a sound using that person's name although any sound can be made using that name. Further, the sounder to whom the name belongs can be thought of as the soloist, and is free to express any sound she wishes as long as she uses her name as the basic sounding block. The other members must take their cues from her, and use their sound making through her name, to support/accompany the leader/soloist. When another person wants to become leader, or when the first person is tired of being the leader and thus stops using her name, another person must call out their name. The first person may relinquish her name

readily, or after a battle of names, in a transition that is always very interesting. Once the new name is settled upon everybody now can say/sing/sound/chant only the new name. This continues until everyone has had their name/turn. The group then returns to quiet, low breath resonances and then to breath only before finishing.

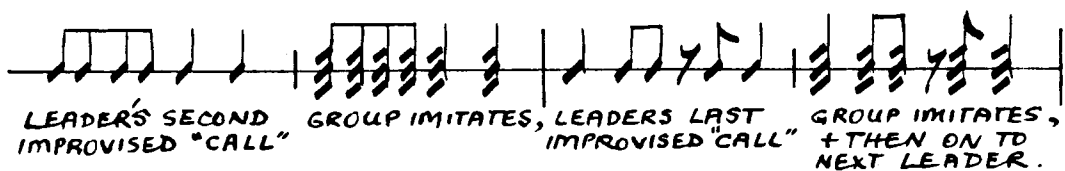
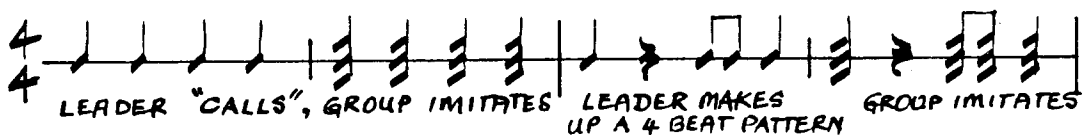
RHYTHM EXERCISE

Get the group in a circle facing inwards. Demonstrate the basic side-to-side foot shuffle. Legs should be slightly bent, the upper body straight but relaxed and arms free to swing naturally. A pulse of about quarter-note = 120 works well.



This first foot stepping rhythm is basic. Its function is to set up a simple and reliable body pulse which keeps the group together but leaves everyone's hands and minds free for other things like clapping.

A) The basic clapping game goes:



Explain and run through this a few times until it is clear. Now start the 'game' off, going continuously round the circle with the role of 'leader' going to the first person on your right.

The rules are:

The first 'call' for each new 'leader' must be:

(This gives everyone a chance to get their bearings.) The remaining three calls are up to them.

"Calls' must not take longer than 1 bar or start before the downbeat.*

* Reprinted from Dadson and Mcglashan. (1989) **The From Scratch Rhythm Handbook**. Heinmann Educational Press. Auckland.

GLISSANDI EXERCISE (see rhythmic exercise)

Instead of rhythm however, use one 4/4 bar of the following (sa pa sa pa sa - - -), alternating with a 4/4 bar of any kind of glissandi pitched material, starting or finishing on sa or pa. This same exercise can be done on other metres such as three or five, and also at varying tempi. This particular exercise is particularly good for including timbral and emotional levels since the 'free' bar can be any sound as long as it ends or begins with sa or pa. As a variation, instead of glissandi sound, ending or beginning with sa or pa, try embellishments beginning with sa or pa that vary the articulation (for example, very detached sounds).

IMITATION/DEVIATION EXERCISE

Relax. Take long deep breaths and concentrate breathing deeply into the centre of your body. When you are ready, start resonating long tones with your breath. After five of your own resonations, begin to listen. Imitate one sound you hear. Then make a sound contrasting in emotional or timbral quality. Continue this alteration, one imitation, one totally different sound, until you feel the work is done, then recentre yourself with long, slow silent breaths.

SCORPT 1. REACTIVE MUSIC

Reactive music is music that supports spoken text through repetition of words from the text. Simple musical instructions basically echo and or stretch words on specified pitches, using certain rhythmic rules.

In rehearsal, HOUSE chooses word from the text that she wishes to work with. She may then choose to articulate the words in a singing fashion using either drone, rhythm or glissandi

1) Drone.

Choose a word. Choose pitch Sa. Articulate the word through stretching any syllable of it on the pitch Sa. Pulse the stretched syllable on a five count or a three count, with varying stresses (i.e. emphasizing different strong beats each time). Repeat the stretched word any number of times, each time choosing a different rhythmic articulation. Tempo is chosen from tempo of text.

2) Rhythm

Choose a short one syllable word. Repeat the word any number of times on pitch Sa to a five or three count with varying stresses. Choose tempo from text.

3) Choose a word. Choose glissando based on Sa Pa Sa. Pa Sa. (ascending then descending). Stretch a syllable of a word through glissando. Speed of glissandi determined by text.

SCORPT 2. VOCAL SOUNDS

Four types of sounds may be chosen to support text of other characters.

- 1) Animal cries. Whale sounds. Very, high pitched, soft little cries.
- 2) Voice creaking. Slowly release the breath through the closed vocal chords until a clicking croaking sound is heard. Percieved pitch of 'creak' is changed through shape of mouth.
- 3) Sighs. Very gentle sighs. Just a touch of sound.
- 4) Amplified Breathing. Audible inhalation and exhalation. Needs journey to inform it.

In addition, HOUSE should note any sounds she discovers through the sonic meditations that are appropriate for this section.

SCORPT 3. TEXT LINKING

Aim. To link HOUSE's text in section D so that it sounds like HOUSE is sounding all the time.

Between each segment of text, while the others are speaking, choose simple sounds from scorpt 2 to link the text.

VOKIAMS

The following Vokiams are indicated in the script as Vokiam 1, 2 etc. The Vokiams are notated in the Indian saregam method. The following description should suffice. Sa, re ga ma pa dha ni sa. is the equivalent of Do, re mi fa so la te do. A line under any of the notes, means that note is flattened. A dot above the note means it is in the high register. A dot below means it is in the low register.

The scale used for the Vokiams is

Sa, re ga ma dha sa. (ascending)

Sa ni dha pa ma ga re sa. (descending)

If sa were middle C, then in Western notation, the scale would go C Db E F Ab C, ascending and C Ab G F E Db C. descending.

Rhythm is indicated as single beats grouped in mainly four (but sometimes more) beat sections. e.g. lsa re ga mal. A rest is indicated by a dash -, although sometimes the dash means sustain the note. The difference is indicated by the text. If there are two notes to a beat, a smaller size font indicates that. The pitch of sa is found by tuning to the room, i.e. by finding the first available harmonic of the simulated resonating frequency of the space that lies within the range of the voice and making that the sa.

In working with the Vokiams, the following aspects of the raga should be learned.

- 1) The scale should be learned.
- 2) Glissandi between re and sa (descending only).
- 3) High sa's either fall away in pitch (approx a semitone down), and in amplitude, or have an upward 'wiggle' (or approximately an upper flattened mordent). Singer can choose.
- 5) Sustained Dhas have a wiggle on them.

Each of the Vokiams should then be learned thoroughly. Only then is the singer free to improvise when various Vokiams are requested, although her improvisations must a) always stay within the scale, b) always use the glissandi and embellishment conventions outlined above. c) should occur on the repetition of the phrase, rather than the first iteration of it.

VOKIAM 1

Very soft. Text 'and waited'.

sa - - - | re - sa - | - sa re ga | re - sa - | - - sa re |
 and| wait-ted | a ----nd| wait-ted | a----|

| ga ma re - | sa - - - | sa re ga ma | ldha - - - |
 --nd wait- ted an-----d |wai-----|

| - - - - | - - - - | pa ga re sa | - - - - |

-----te-----d l

VOKIAM 2

Cue text "this is all there is".

Sung to text chosen by singer.

Rhythmically pulsed to a fast four count.

All sung very softly under ensuing dialogue.

Each phrase lasts a breath length.

The last note of the group is sustained.

Sections five to nine may be repeated any number of times.

1) Sa.

2) Sa - Dha -

3) Sa Dha pa - -

4) Sa Dha pa ga le - -

5) sa sa sa sa

6) re re re re

7) sa sa sa sa

8) dha dha dha dha

9) |sa sa sa sa|- sa salsa sa- |dha dha dha sa | sa sa sa - |dha dha dha sa |

VOKIAM 3

First sung with the Continuum. Slowly. Later on (as part of Vokiam 5) quickly.

1. |sa re ga galma dha pa dha pa - |dha pa dha pa dha pa - |

isa sa sa sa sa sal. repeat

2. |sa re ga ga ga ga re | sa sa sa sa re ga ma ma ma ma ga | re re re re sa |

isa sa sa sa re ga malpa ma pa ma pa ma pa ma ma lga ma ga ma ga re |

isa sa sa sa sa | sa ni dha pa ma ga re sal

3. | Sa -re ga ga | ma dha pa dha pa - | dha pa dha pa dha pa | sa ni dha pa ma ga re sal

* 3.

4. | dha - - - | - - - - | - - - - | pa - - - | - - - - | ma - - - | - - - - |

VOKIAM 4

In the second long speech of HOUSE the following words have been chosen to be captured by the digital delay, processed and repeated as the text continues.

More, Silenced, Forgotten, Remembered, Waited, Watched, Nothing.

These words have asterisks after them in the text itself.

VOKIAM 5

This song is sung at the climax of the work.

It is sung to 'ah'.

Some lines are repeated, as indicated.

slow.

1. | sa re ga - | ma ga re - | sa re -sa re - - | ma ga re - |

2. | sa re - ga | ma ga - re | sa re sa re - - | ma - ga re |

3. | sa - dha -|sa dha -sa dha - sa dha|sa dha- pa -|ga re- dha| (* 2)

Faster.

4. | sa - sa - | dha - - - | - - - ma | - - - dha | ga - re sa |

| - - dha - | sa - pa ga | re sa re sa - - | (repeat)

5. (breath length for following three notes with free glissandi)

(MOTHER and PERUSHA/JANA begin accompaniment here with wails, keens

and chants and text repetition)

ma, re, sa

6. |dha - dha - |dha - pa ga | - sa - sa | - sa - sa | (* 3)

7. |ma ga ma ga - - |re - - sa|ma ga ma ga - - | re - sa -| hold last sa

8. Sing all of Vokiam 3. Fast speed.

9. | sa ni dha pa ma ga re sa | sa (long slow gliss up to high sa).

CHANTING

Whenever JANA serves tea, she must chant using harmonic chanting. This is a form of chanting where a single low tone is held, and the mouth shape varied to bring out the upper harmonics.

ELECTROACOUSTIC MUSIC

In addition to text, vocalizations and Vokiams, there is a considerable amount of electronic music and sound in WOMAN AND HOUSE. This area of the work can be broken down into five areas: 1) Tuning to the space, 2) Processing of text, vocalizations and Vokiams through signal processing equipment, 3) The live mixing of tapes composed using granular synthesis. 4) Diffusion. 5) The sound system for the songs of the home appliances.

TUNING THE SPACE

Tuning the space can be achieved through simulating the effect of a resonant room frequency through controlled feedback with microphones subtly feeding back from speakers through various processors (EQ and Delay or Reverberation). This effect gives a certain frequency that the performers can tune to (in their Vokiams and vocalizations) and also makes the room a variable, controllable acoustic space.

THE PHYSICAL SET-UP.

Electroacoustic sound is generated and controlled through two sound stations and sent to eight loudspeakers. The first sound station is operated by HOUSE. In terms of HOUSE as character, Sound Station One can be conceptually connected to HOUSE by thinking of it as 'all the switches in a modern house'. In such a model, sound becomes the electrical current to which all the switches are connected. On Sound Station One, there is a microphone, a signal processor, a tape deck and a small mixing console. Each of these devices is operated by HOUSE. From Sound Station One comes two signal lines, which are sent to Sound Station Two. This station contains a microphone, signal processor, tape deck, EQ and a mixer with eight outputs for distributing the sound to eight different loud speakers. It also contains the pitch to voltage convertors for 'house lighting and whatever amplifiers are needed for the PA system. The feedback system to enhance the room resonances, using additional microphones and embellished through signal processing and EQ is also controlled from Sound Station Two.

SIGNAL PROCESSING OF TEXT, VOCALIZATIONS AND VOKIAMS

All sound made by HOUSE, text, vocalizations and Vokiams, passes through an SPX 900 (or 1000) Multi-effect Processor. In a signal processor such as the SPX 900, there are a number of different options available. These can be broken down into the areas of

pitch change (which includes chorusing, harmonization), timbre change (which includes modulation, phasing, flanging and EQ), and situation change (which includes the addition of repetition, spatial relocation and change of reverberation).

HOUSE controls her own signal processing. In other words, she is responsible for how her voice sounds both with and without technological assistance. Modification of the voice must be done with the director, and must refer to what HOUSE is trying to express. A simplified list of vocal qualities and what they imply is listed. This of course may be elaborated in rehearsal.

- 1) Delay. Distance, Memory. Reiteration. (with multiple repeats)
- 2) Reverberation. Space. Apartness.
- 3) Pitch change. To emphasize an attribute that may be associated with gender.
- 4) Addition of one or more voices - emphasis on what is said. Multiple layers of meaning. Group sentiment.
- 5) EQ change. Using technology to carry the voice (e.g. telephone)
- 6) Modulation. Distortion.

LIVE MIXING OF TAPES.

Double tapes are required in WOMAN AND HOUSE to add variability to the tape music. For example, if the two tapes are the same, starting them at slightly different times allows for variations such as phasing, flanging and (if the delay is long enough) a sense of canon, all of which give a psychological effect of increased tension. When

the two tapes are of differing material, then of course the addition (and subtraction) of other voices is possible as well.

The act of turning on a tape is, for HOUSE, an action that is in response to another character. The director must find, in HOUSE's character, reasons for her reactions in the form of technological actions. Other technological actions that HOUSE initiates include changing the setting on the signal processor, which alters the quality of her voice, and changing the level control on the mixer. In addition, the director must work with House's response to how she hears the sound and how she responds to its spacial location and overall sound level. Once these motivations for HOUSE's technological actions have been determined, then they can be applied to how the second tape is played, in terms of its temporal relationship with the first tape, (i.e. whether it starts at the same time as the other tape, or after a delay), the relative levels between the two, the overall levels of both tapes, and the degree of panning used for the overall sound. For example when HOUSE responds to MOTHER returning from the shower by playing her THE CLOUDY DESCENT, the motivation for this action could be the desire to express support for MOTHER. The playing of the second tape could thus be delayed by a relatively long period (say 10 seconds), thus reiterating the sentiment by repeating the music at a recognisable delay rate and giving a sense of canon.

Other motivations discovered through directorial means in support of House's action can also be used to inform the relationship between the two tapes. For example, if the motivation is one of agitation, then

the second tape can be turned on after a quite short delay (under a second) to increase the movement of the music, and thus the perceived agitation.

Extremely short time delays of under 1/4 second can be used to give a flanging quality, when the motivation is to underscore the sacred quality of the situation.

In the case where two tapes of differing material are used, the relation of the second to the first can be determined by the reaction of HOUSE to her own technological action. For example, after the action of turning on the tape, HOUSE's anxiety may be soothed through listening to the sounds. The second tape can thus be brought in on a long slow fade, and the levels alternated gently to support the state of soothing.

The motivation for action on the part of house thus affects the temporal and amplitude relations between the two tapes. It also however affects overall levels and panning. Further information about tape mixing can be found in the rehearsal schedule.

DIFFUSION

Diffusion is the art of sending audio signals to a number of speakers around the room, thus giving the effect of the moving sound. Within diffusion systems, there are two main considerations. The first is how the stereo pair (in this case) will be physically placed in the room.

The second is that each stereo pair should be matching speakers, even if, from speaker to speaker, the pairs are different.

HOME APPLIANCE SOUND SYSTEMS

The sound system for the home appliance songs differs markedly from the main sound system. Each home appliance that is used as a prop, also has built into it, a portable sound system (based on ghetto blaster technology). Thus the actor turns on and off the songs (which are looped on the tape). The poor quality of the reproductive technology is deliberate here, since the home appliances are 'lo-fi' electronic sounds.

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