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# Hinaus:: In den, Wald.

Sound Installation

Museum Essl, Austria 2001

singuhr - hörgalerie, Berlin 2003

CD-version released by Klanggalerie, Austria in March 2004.

## **Hinaus:: In den, Wald.**

Most artists who drew inspiration from Adolf Wölfli's work focused on his drawings or the content of his narration. But Wölfli's texts encourage an acoustic interpretation as well: I am interested in the permanent discontinuities in his "fantastic-realistic" travel descriptions - those inserted language structures (listings, poems, songs, etc.) in which the sound and rhythm of language gain independence, where texts can only be perceived on an abstract/musical level.

In 'Hinaus:: In den, Wald.' (which translates into: 'Out:: Into the, forest.', deliberately written with 'Wölfli-esque' punctuation) I translate Wölfli's written transformations, abstractions and creations into my own sound language. Points of reference are Adolf Wölfli's idiosyncratic punctuation and orthography, the rhythmic-repetitive character of his listings and testaments and Wölfli's biography and megalomania in general. I tried to express his permanent creative urge through an additional recording, which is based on my own walking, running and breathing "out there in the woods".

Different text passages are interwoven on several layers - from totally untreated phrases to modified elements. Specific sound properties like speech rhythm, speech melody or contextual associations were focal points of my "creative processing". Language always oscillates between functional clearness and sonic abstraction, but also between conscious and unconscious perception. By listening on headphones, you enter Adolf Wölfli's mind, hearing voices whispering inside your (his?) head, running through the woods, breathing. All texts were spoken by myself or by Stella Kao, a Taiwanese girl who didn't understand German at all (not to mention the distortions of Wölfli's 'personal language'..). I'd like to call this intuitive and pure approach of Stella's readings a kind of natural filtering, in my opinion far more interesting than many digital audio-software effects. Stella's voice can also be seen as a cross reference to a) the voice of young Wölfli himself or b) the voice of one of his victims.

As a sound installation *Hinaus:: In den, Wald* was presented in a completely dark environment, the resulting perceptual situation (to be listening to close-up voices in a quite intimate - even claustrophobic - setting without any visual cues) made some visitors feel quite uncomfortable and might be regarded as a spatialization of Wölfli's subconscious. Up to 8 sound layers were projected into the space over four loudspeakers, with various silent parts added in between to vary the installation's density. The succession of sequences was partly controlled and partly random, thus the sound installation was presented in changing combinations and structures.

The cd-booklet contains some of the original texts by Adolf Wölfli that were used as source materials in 'Hinaus:: In den, Wald' (taken from Wölfli's imaginary autobiography «*From the Cradle to the Grave*» (1908-12) and «*Geographic and Algebraic Books*» (1912-16), with kind permission from the Wölfli Foundation, Bern).

Bernhard Gál, January 2004

An adapted cd-version of 'Hinaus:: In den, Wald.' will be released by *Klangalerie* in March 2004.

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