

MANY HAVE NO SPEECH

WATT/19

words by Samuel Beckett, Ernst Meister, Philippe Soupault

Jack Bruce (voice)
Marianne Faithfull (voice)
Robert Wyatt (voice)

Michael Mantler (trumpet)
Rick Fenn (guitar)

The Danish Radio Concert Orchestra conducted by Peder Kragerup

recorded May through December 1987, Copenhagen, London, Boston, Willow, NY

INSTRUMENTATION

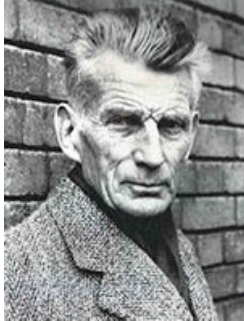
2 flutes or alto flutes
2 oboes or english horns
2 clarinets
2 bassoons or contrabassoons
2 french horns
2 trumpets
2 trombones or bass trombones
14 violins / 4 violas / 4 cellos / 2 basses
harp / piano / vibraphone (chimes)
solo trumpet / solo guitar

TITLES

Introduction / Just As Someone / Ce Qu'a De Pis / Alles Scheint Rand / Imagine / In The End / Vieil
Aller / Rien Null Tant de Temps / En Face / Chaque Jour / PSS / En Cadence / Something There /
Comrade / Den Atem Ausgetauscht / A L'Abattoir / And What / D'où La Voix / Fou Qui Disiez / Merk,
Jetzt / Son Ombre / Reve / Life Connects / Prisonniers / Silence / Viele Haben Keine Sprache

ABOUT THE WRITERS

Samuel Beckett, Irish, born in 1906. Lived in France since the late Twenties until his death in 1989. Best known for his play *Waiting For Godot*, a classic of the modern theater. One of the most important writers of this century, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature.



Ernst Meister, German, born in 1911, died in 1979. Recognized as one of Germany's greatest modern poets, in the line of Hölderlin, Trakl, and Celan, the latter of whom he discovered. He was awarded many literary awards, including the Petrarca-Preis, the Rilke-Preis, and from the German Academy for Languages and Literature, posthumously, the Buchner-Preis.

Almost all of his poems are meditations about death, from his earliest publication in 1935 (*Ausstellung*) until his latest and perhaps most achieved work (*Wandloser Raum*) in 1979. In between he published numerous other volumes of poetry and several radio plays.



*Viele
haben keine
Sprache.
War ich nicht selbst
satt von Elend,
ich bewegte
die Zunge nicht.*

*Many
have no
speech.
Had I not
my fill of misery,
I would not
move my tongue.*

From *Sage vom Ganzen den Satz*
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Philippe Soupault, French, born in 1897, died in 1990. He founded the review *Litterature* in 1919 with Breton and Aragon, and was the co-author with Breton of *Les Champs magnetiques*, the first Surrealist text. He was active in French Dada and a central figure of Surrealism in its early years, though he eventually drifted away from the movement.

He was prolific novelist and essayist, perhaps best known for one of his early novels, *Last Nights of Paris* (1928), which was translated into English by William Carlos Williams. He traveled all over the world, worked as a journalist, and taught at Pennsylvania State College and Swarthmore College. He was arrested by the Germans in 1942 and spent six months in prison. He has also written pieces for radio and theater, and edited one of the first complete editions of Lautréamont.



ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Jack Bruce, the voice of Cream, from the heyday of 60's rock, has always managed to work within unusual contexts, from bands with Leslie West, Mick Taylor, Billy Cobham, to Lifetime with Tony Williams and John McLaughlin, Anton Fier's Golden Palominos, and Carla Bley's *Escalator Over The Hill* album. Has also recorded many great solo albums, most notably *Harmony Row* and *Out Of The Storm*.

Marianne Faithfull, a new addition to Mantler's cast of distinctive voices. With a hectic past, full of character, she has come a long way from early stardom with *As Tears Go By* (her first hit, written by Mick Jagger and Keith Richards). Reappearing with a series of strong albums, such as *Broken English* and *Strange Weather*. A unique singer with a haunting voice of extraordinary depth, taking up where Lotte Lenya and Marlene Dietrich left off.

Robert Wyatt was originally the drummer with Soft Machine, England's legendary art-rock-jazz-fusion band, then primarily singer-songwriter, pursuing a solo recording career with classic albums such as *Rock Bottom*, *Ruth Is Stranger Than Richard* and *Old Rottenhat*. Extremely reclusive, no live performances, and only rare recorded appearances. Extremely involved and concerned with politics for social change.

AN INTERVIEW

Why are you writing music with words? Why literary texts?

After having written only instrumental music for a period of about ten years, it was actually the desire to work with voices again which started this project. Obviously this required a search of appropriate texts. I don't feel qualified to write words myself and I also know of no writers who I wanted to specifically write for me. So I turned to a wide range of existing contemporary poetry which might represent something that I could identify with. After rejecting a lot of it as unsuitable, I finally arrived at the choice of writers and texts represented in this album.

Why several authors and languages?

I had not intended to write an album based purely on one writer's work, but somehow to find a variety of songs, blended together coherently, both in their musical treatment, as well as in their range of expression. I also found no particular reason to stay with one language. Although I originally began looking for poetry in English, I eventually came across much that was in French, a very beautiful language to be sung, and then also continued to find a lot in German, which is my native tongue, and therefore a natural choice for me. Some of the poems existed only in the original, although I used some translations, where they were available, in order to maintain a balance between the usage of the three languages.

Why do you find these texts particularly suitable for your music?

Besides having the thought content I want represented, they all exhibit a sparseness, precision, and economy of language that I especially like, and that I found very easy to combine with my music. It is also very important for me that the words are abstractions of thoughts and feelings, rather than literal expressions of someone's everyday experiences. I feel very strongly about incorporating a certain kind of ambiguity in order to give the listener as much latitude of interpretation as possible. And I think that the poetry of Beckett, Meister and Soupault exhibit these qualities perfectly.

How did you choose the singers and is there a relationship between the types of voices you use and the poetic and musical content?

The voices I like all have a certain dramatic quality, which I think is absolutely necessary to express the intentions of the words and therefore the music. I want them to have character and to be naturally rough, somewhat unpolished, maybe even broken, with an expressive edge, yet musical. The singers I am using all have these qualities, in varying degrees, yet they are quite different from each other, and I find that they provide interesting contrasts in the musical and poetic sequence of the album.

Voices like these usually come from jazz or popular music, and the only problem is to find someone sophisticated enough to sing difficult music and identify with the equally difficult words. Therefore I consider myself very lucky to have been involved with Jack Bruce, Robert Wyatt, and Marianne Faithfull, singers who I have all admired for years. They had the vocal and musical qualities I needed, and they were not only interested, but also able to sing the music. And each in their own, distinct, and wonderful way.

Does improvisation have a place in your music?

Yes, to a certain extent, but not in the traditional sense of jazz, where improvisation usually dominates as the expression of the player. There is freedom in the interpretation of some melodies, as well as elaboration on them. And there are also some totally improvised sections, which are, however, very specifically based on compositional elements in order to become an integral part of the whole work.

What is the role of the trumpet and guitar on this album?

They act as additional voices in contrast to the orchestra and they accompany and answer the singers. They carry most of the instrumental melodic material and develop all the improvisation and embellishment. As a trumpet player I am assuming the role of sparsely supplying a sound that is not really a solo voice, but one that blends in with the composition as a whole. I have

always very much liked the sound of an electric rock-type guitar in combination with my trumpet, and **Rick Fenn's** playing is used in a similar manner.



After the purely electronic orchestral sound of "Alien", what made you return to the conventional acoustic orchestra?

So far, almost all of my music has been orchestral in scope, even if an orchestra wasn't used as such. In "Alien", that sound was intentionally created electronically, although the idea was definitely not to imitate the sound of an acoustic orchestra, but rather to create a broad spectrum of sounds not necessarily available from a real orchestra, using today's synthesizers and studio technology as much as possible. I was very happy with the outcome, but I generally feel the need to continue with other and different methods once a project is finished. Therefore it was a fairly obvious step for me to again explore the possibilities of a conventional orchestra.

Do you have an audience in mind when writing or producing your music?

I do not think of an audience during that process at all. But I do expect it to have an audience eventually. I am not trying to appeal to anyone in particular, I just want people to be moved and touched by the music, that's what is important to me. If it doesn't do that to the listener, then I wouldn't consider it successful, at least not on my terms. I very much dislike the intellectualizing and analyzing that a certain kind of audience does, I much prefer to reach someone on an emotional level.

You seem to exhibit a strong tendency towards darkness in your music. Why?

I can't really explain why. I don't deliberately write "dark" music, it's simply there. I have no particular desire to write "light" music, and I would indeed find it very difficult to do so. I don't think that life and the human existence in general are such positive events, so I don't feel especially challenged to express the opposite.
