



Cie Distorsions / Hervé Birolini

Solo electronic piece

DES ÉCLAIRS

Ruhmkorff coils
& electronics

creation 2020

TEASER



Cover picture: ©Arnaud Hussenot

World premiere at the CCAM, Vandoeuvre-lès-Nancy, September 11 2020

DES ÉCLAIRS

Title in tribute to the eponymous novel by Jean Echenoz

Solo electronic piece

Ruhmkorff coils & electronics

Production : Compagnie Distorsions

Co-production : CCAM (Vandoeuvre-lès-Nancy)

Supported by : DRAC Grand Est, Région Grand-Est

Residencies : CCAM

Scenography & music : Hervé Birolini

Length : 40'

World Premiere : September 11 2020, Festival Musique Action, CCAM

2020 tour : November 1st 2020, Festival EviMus (Sarrebruck, Germany)

« My music is not electronics, but electricity ! »

NOTE OF INTENT

The projects *Tesla* and *Des Éclairs* are the beginning of a cycle of reflection and works around the question of energy. *Des Éclairs* is about using not only speakers, but also the sonic power of the electric arc. Electric charges, shocks, fluxes, deflagrations, Plasma speakers, Ruhmkorff coils and Tesla coils, are different and complementary devices to enable us to see and hear electric matter in movement.

In the way of 19th century inventors and physicists, who staged the progress of their researches during scientific conferences prefiguring the arrival of electricity in our daily life, I will try to make a performance out of energy.

However, I will not engage in grand demonstrations consisting in producing gigantic electric arcs on stage. I will rather attempt to draw space thanks to the sound they produce, and try to imagine a scenography that places these sounds at the heart of the stage device. That being said, if the sonic manifestation of the arc produces raw matter, it will be thoroughly controlled by the computer.

EXPÉRIENCES DE M. TESLA SUR LES COURANTS ALTERNATIFS DE GRANDE FRÉQUENCE

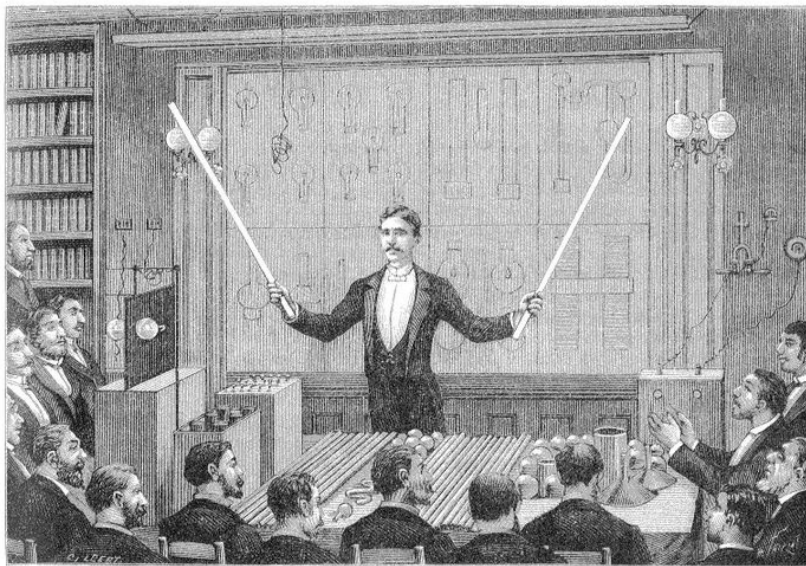


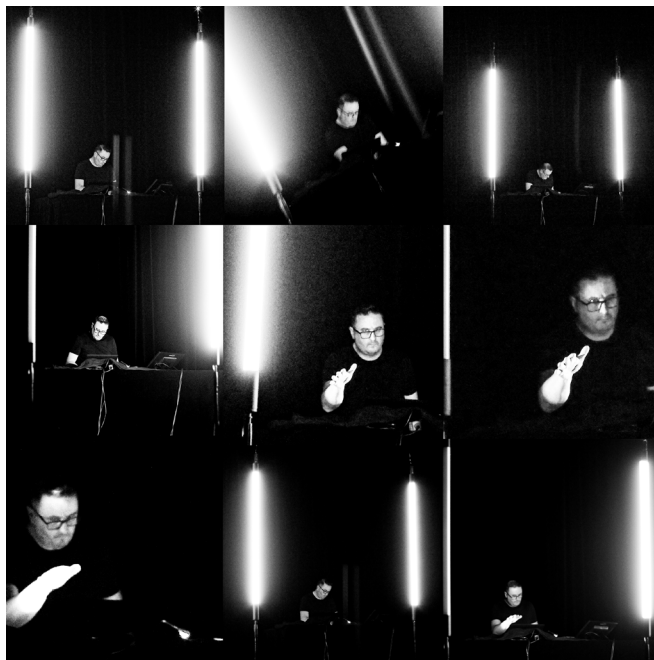
Fig. 1. — Conférence de M. Tesla devant la Société de physique et à Société internationale des électriciens, le 20 février 1892.

SONOROUS MATTERS

To create different sonorous matters, I am using sources from different electric arcs. From reedy, sizzling sounds and the deflagrations happening live under the audience's eyes, to the throbbing of engines, the swarms of electrotherapeutic machines, the undulations of sinusoidal flows, the claps of relay electromechanics, or buttons that will be broadcasted matter... Here is a glimpse of the palette with which I composed this piece.



Recording the first electric arcs with Ruhmkorff coils during a residency in Césaré, Centre National de creation Musicale, Reims.



Des Éclairs attempts a raw approach of the musical, with a mise-en-abyme of the energy itself. To reveal, in a direct way, the pulsation, the wave, the flux of electrons, the difference in potential that gives birth to sound through electroacoustics... A sort of return to the origins of sound. The deflagration of the electric arc produces by the coils, the hissing of the plasma speakers and the richness of synthesis are at the center of the sonorous matters of this work.

THE SCENOGRAPHY

Arranged across the stage, on top of vertical light tubes, the Ruhmkorff coils punctuate the space. They stand like primary, sometimes surprising, even troubling acoustic instruments.

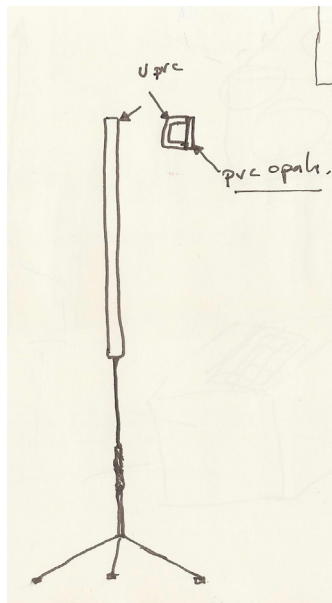
To arrange these objects in a way that they will “prick the space” is a way to describe a line, a field, a surface of electric arcs.

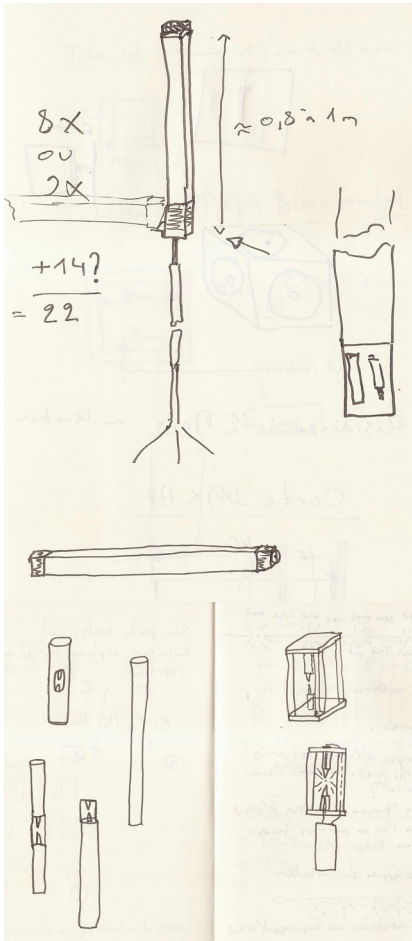
The production of electric arcs, even the tiniest, also generates light. The person operating this is hidden from the audience for a while. They manipulate this sizzling space, thus generating pointillist forms and incredible sonorous spaces. I use not only coils, but also a classic set of speakers, which allows me to create hybrid tones and a mixt playing situation.

This work carries at its heart a series of technological elements that mostly have not been designed to be used in concert. The different coils are rather destined to be used in laboratory experimentations, or in objects such as tasers.

© Hervé Birolini

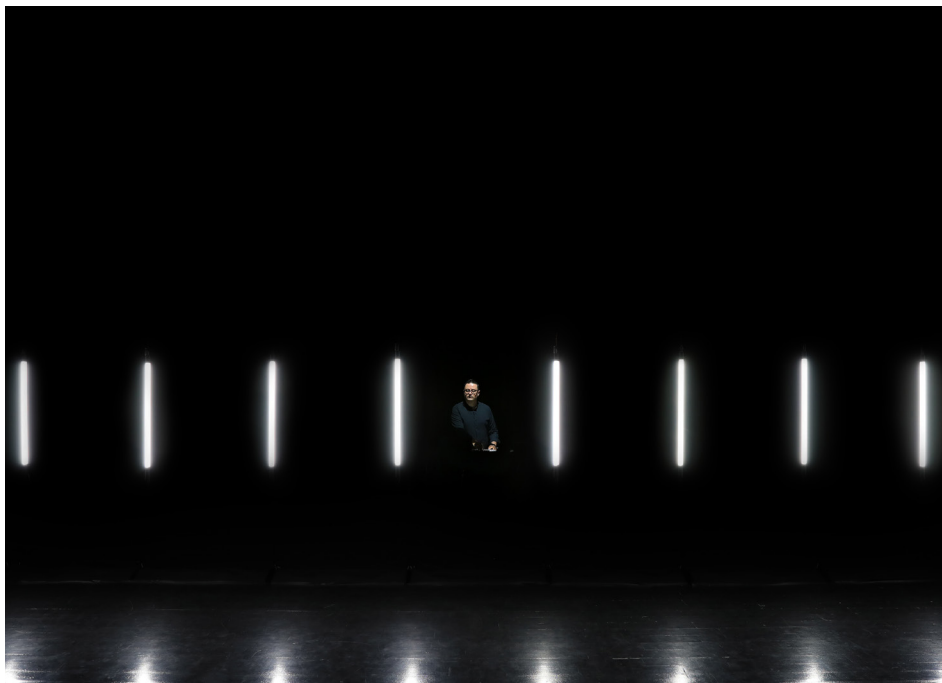
*Fist sketches of mixed speakers
producing lightnings and sounds*





If we look closely, the primary matter of modern experimentations is just a variation of electric energy. Since the end of the 19th century, we have learned to thoroughly master electricity. Today, lighting and communication devices, computers or phones, are omnipresent in our daily lives. Thus, all these daily actions – turn on the light, send an email, take a picture, process an image of produce sound – are possible only thanks to the refinement, to the precise transformation of electric energy.

However, what interests me here is not to produce only one object to regroup ways of producing sound. I dream of mixed objects producing sounds, arcs and lights.



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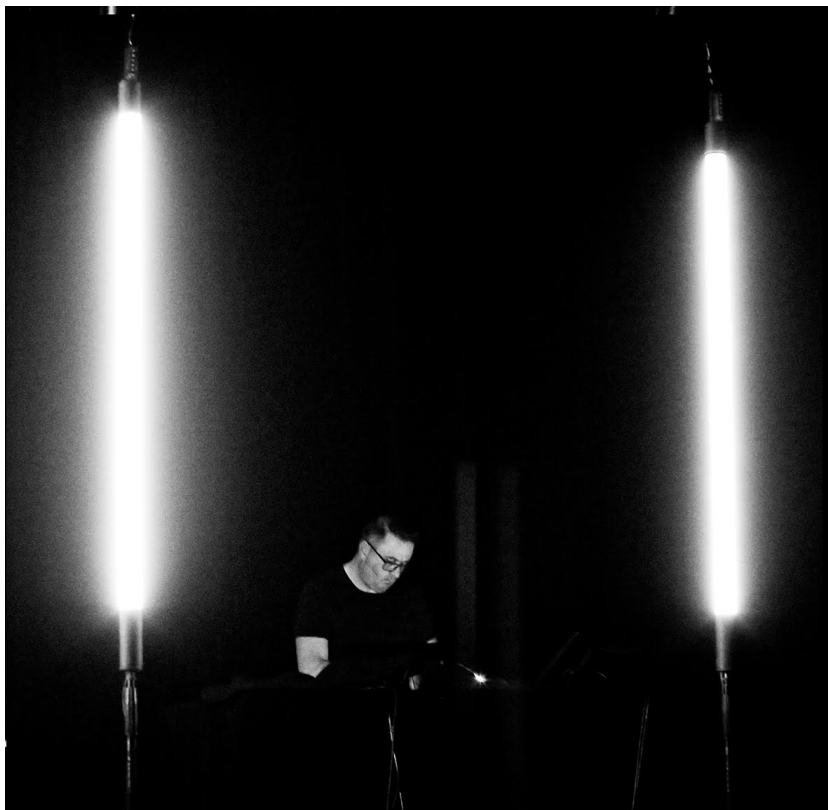
THE GESTURE

In my recent work, the relationship between gestures and sound production has been very important. In order to manipulate these electric deflagrations, I continue to engage in this work, with sensors such as the “Leap Motion”, which enable me to control spaces and sounds via the computer.

The actions of waving hands controlling sounds and electric matters will surely revive the magic of the first demonstrations of the power of electricity.

As Pierre Henry said: “My music is not electronics, but electricity!”. This electricity without which synthesizers and speakers would not exist.

Des Éclairs is an experiment with electroacoustic fundamentals, attempting to expose and exploit energy and its primary mechanisms.



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HERVÉ BIROLINI

www.hervebirolini.com

Hervé Birolini explores all the areas of sound. From concert pieces to installations, from electroacoustic performances to incidental music for films and drama, from radiophonic art to mixed music, his different experimentations enrich each other and constantly question his role as a composer.

Essentially electronic, his music is produced with physical, concrete or instrumental materials but is also based on sound objects produced through virtual instrument-making, personalised and in constant reinvention. In his work, technology is a tool as well as a way to question the contemporary production of the sensitive. His taste for performing arts, and particularly his connection to dance, leads him to create musical pieces which engage space, the body, gesture and scenography.

His music borders on electronic, concrete, experimental and contemporary music in its broadest sense. His creations have toured numerous festivals in France and abroad, such as AKOUSMA, Live at CIRMMT, Signal and Noise (Canada), Présence électronique, Reevox, Electricity, Futura, Entre cour et jardins, Musique Action (France), Archipel (Suisse)...



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