

## **Interview to Josep-Maria Balanyà**

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**Víctor Sunyol**, writer and poet

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Your music and your attitude towards music have always been related to improvisation (at least the audience understands it in this way). Nevertheless, you vindicate your status of composer, you are even the president of the Associació Catalana de Compositors (1). The improviser is a composer? Which characteristics of the composition work are different when talking of an improviser and a composer understood in the classical way? (How do you work?)

I do not have a way out, therefore I will do as when I am on the stage: I will tell the truth. It is true that my music and my attitude (musical and some times extra-musical) are saturated with improvisation. In this case, the audience does not deceive themselves, although when they listen to some of my recordings (for example Elements of Development (some people has asked me if that has been written in its totality or not. I will explain the process of this CD, which is quite representative of what I do. When I went to the recording studio, which was near Köln, in Germany, I had with me a series of themes prepared, with outlines, rhythmical sequences and melodies, and a good dose of improvisation, more or less planned. All together would give form to the repertoire of that session. Once I have finished the first session, we had quite a lot of free time and the sound engineer and I decided to continue recording. I went straight away and we recorded what came out in that moment, without any previously conceived premeditation, but just telling to the engineer if I was going to play the next piece loudly or softly. I was concentrated, creating a state inside myself and I started. Only two pieces were previously prepared: Estudi per a piano, pinxitos i tub de plàstic, already presented in public in some occasion, and Mar, where a strong influence of jazz tradition can be appreciated, especially in reference to harmony. The rest of the material was created in situ, and the works that I had prepared (except the two that I mentioned) remained in the master. Afterwards, in the post-production work, we excluded some notes that did not fit, something usual in a work of pure and plain improvisation.

Later, at home, and due to two specific reasons, I gave shape to those improvisations into scores. How horrible! would say the pure improvisers. They are right, I break the magic of something that is on the air, that cannot be ever catch again, and I imprison it within sings on a paper. But this is not, and I am going to explain my reasons now. The first is a documentary and aesthetic reason: a paper that through graphs, drawings and traditional musical notation is transformed into a unique document and a guide, for musicians and beginners. Moreover it goes beyond the limits of music and its score and it gets closer to plastic arts, which are so related to music. It transforms into a plastic document explained by the listener and at the same time intriguing him or her, who is approached to the work of musical creation through a closer field, because in general today everybody is unfortunately nearer to a visual information than to a musical one.

The second reason is also documentary and practical: not only there is an official recording on support audio, but in addition there is a score, a requirement of the SGAE (Spanish General Society of Authors) for a musical piece to be valid. Do not tell me that this is not a stupidity. In the German society of authors this does not happen, for example. But this is not the moment to demonstrate that they are wrong.

Your first question carries three other questions, and I have just answered the first. I try to answer the second, which is the hardest one. How is it possible that the president of the Catalan Association of Composers devotes himself basically to creation in real time, writing scores with non-orthodox little drawings; writing operas and earning a living out of his work? It is easy to explain, although it sounds quite surrealist. I wanted to learn and have contact with a not so very well known field for me. And, simply, because nobody else participated. When I had my candidature very clear somebody else participated. I thought there were no candidates but the other gave up when he knew that I stood for it. I have anticipated the poll but nobody has stood for the candidature, therefore I am very happy that my collective still relies on me although I am not a composer in the orthodox sense of the term. This is something to be thankful for. Anyway, I have little time left to finish the term.

In reference to the improviser being a composer, I must say that the improviser is creating in real time, and his work defers from that of the composer, who is sitting in front of a sheet of paper in that the result is very different. The composer-paper moves within parameters he meditates and transmits on the paper, he can even make modifications and revise the score if he is not satisfied with it. The improviser not, once he decided to give a musical information, this is already given and it is too late to go backwards. Moreover if the work of creation that he is doing in real time is accompanied by electronics in real time too, this becomes very complex and can lead to dangerous fields. This is why improvising is not so evident and it is necessary to have a great intuition, instruction and musical background. The improviser creates in real time and this is a kind of music perfectly accepted and valid, and those institutions that do not see it like this... well, what a pity!

Despite of this, I am using different methods right now. In order to illustrate them, I will put three examples.

First working system: To this method belongs the work "Radiografia de la nit" (2), created in 2002. It is a work that lasts 50 minuts, for a soprano, piano and objects, electronics in real time and CD, and video. The score is completely timed to make it coincide with the CD and the video. A composer and a sound technician prepare the electronics in real time. The part for piano has many written parts and leaves space for improvisation, within certain parameters, and to dialogue with the soprano. These parts of improvisation are naturally restricted by time and they cannot be surpassed by the natural pass of time in the score.

The second working system: for example in the work "Sosta vietata", created in the year 2003. A piece for piano, CD, objects, three invented instruments (stahlofon, glockenspiel and petraquarium). All played by a single musician. Time: 55 minutes. In this case the score is also perfectly timed for the CD part. The different parts for the piano or the other objects and instruments are also very well defined. Nevertheless what happens with the 'instruments' –except the piano– is much more open to improvisation. There are some instructions of dynamics and tempos that can be interpreted ad lib (always within the established time). For the piano, that also has a very free part, there is a series of timbrical colours and chords to be used depending on the part being played. Despite of this the result will not differ very much from one interpretation or another, since it is not free improvisation, but limited by time, by the use of each instrument in a particular moment and by the sound track that appears here and there and that must be followed according to some determined examples.

Finally, we could talk about "Un peu à gauche, svp" for piano and stones, an instrument player, lasting for 55 minutes and created in autumn 2003. This piece gives much more freedom for creation in real time, since it only demands a general form in which some determined ambiances are created, conducted by determined groups of strains or clusters, games of stones on the chords and a tonal pedal. It is a way of organising improvisation. Everybody has one or another structure in their head, when starting improvisation, although it is instantaneous. For example, when I have decided to invent on the stage, or when you are asked for a bis, I had the idea of getting an interval as a way of improvising, and I developed a discourse with major thirds, which would not be easy at all to transcribe or play again, this is the magic of improvisation.

—There is an important border between the improvisers and the composer of contemporary music. A border of social appreciation, of institutional aides, of the influx of people going to the concerts... What happens here? How could you explain this?

—Oh yes! It is evident that we are very different, especially in this country. I think that the terms 'composer of contemporary music' and 'improviser' should be closer. Perhaps we could talk about an improviser of contemporary music, who is quite a lot different than a jazz improviser or other musicians, so this distinction would be smaller. When John Cage composed his Music of changes with dices and the result started to be dangerously closer to the music that Stockhausen composed then with really complex methods (see Klavierstücke of the 50s, pieces composed with the method of integral serials), everything started to be insecure. I maintain all my respect for the written music, but it is evident that improvised music gives values and aesthetics to the field of sound that scores would never give, simply because it is different... but perhaps it could happen what we observed with Cage and Stockhausen: it could exist certain confluence?

There is a border of social appreciation, as you say, certainly. There is a closed and reactionary world which defends the classical and romantic music as the only way of musical expression in the cultivated world (ha, ha, the one that is in favour of war as a way of getting peace), and that cannot stand neither going to a concert of contemporary music, nor of new contemporary music. I call it like this to put it closer to the German Neue Musik, for example, that is very much different from the orthodox music and that frequently is mistaken. These are conservative circles, which do not accept a musical expression that is established and which is a historical fact. There is also an audience that goes to concerts of contemporary music. None of these audiences attends concerts of improvised music, only in certain occasions, which is admirable. But they do not mix, and this is a pity. The classical audience detests contemporary music and ignores improvisation, it does not know that it exists indeed. Unfortunately for them, contemporary music, the Neue Musik and improvisation exist and they are a musical and sound fact completely evident, which has a considerable historical basis. I listen to music of different genres and assist to many concerts. I can enjoy a lot with a work by Stravinsky or by Boulez (to give wide time parameters), with a performance by Fred Frith and Chris Cuttler and become asleep with a work by Schönberg, but I consume different things. I organise a season of concerts in which there is a wide margin of new creation from our country, including something of improvisation and other arts. I observe with certain deceive that not many composers assist to these concerts, this is a very different collective from that of dance, we do not give support to each other, it is a bit miserable. We should give example.

There is a borderline between the institutional funds destined to classical music or the groups linked by interests (no matter which) and those who devote

their lives to contemporary music. This is a pitiful fact. This is what happens in Spain in general, we will talk about it later, but in Catalonia it is scandalous. Curiously, certain leaders who believe to be intelligent do not see that with their actions they impede the enrichment of a decisive part of the musical cultural assets. They are not interested because it neither give votes nor generates richness, poor! There are even young people who have received grants from important foreign institutions and they have not received any support from here. There are composers who have organised an exchange between two countries and from here the hard work has been to receive support for trips as if it were a big thing. In fact, those people have been playing the role of ambassadors of the Catalan culture abroad. But, of course, contemporary music is not something that reflects the Catalan character, perhaps this is the case, since it has no lyrics... What a pity, everything would be better if there was a bit more of openness in our country. Despite of this I must say that there are things that have improved.

In reference to the audience, I think that either the contemporary music or the improvised one suffer from a lack of audience, which could be overcome. This is not chronic, it has been confirmed that, when a concert has been properly announced, more people attends it. An adequate publicity in all means could correct the small influx of people as well as having newspapers, radio and television (oh, the great social tare!) involved as it is their duty instead of giving sectarian information. In addition to this, if people started to be used to listen to other sound worlds, and when they are in the underground, in a bank or in a supermarket did not listen to that unbearable rubbish of remixes and loops that have no name, if people listened to certain contemporary phrases or to improvisation, certainly the situation would start to change and the audience would start to assimilate new musical genres without traumas. But I imagine that those who have power and the royalties of this sound rubbish are not interested. We have already talked about this and there are people who could give more information about it. Could we see a better world? It is difficult, the present audience of masses is used to consume easy and quick things, we should start very subtly. In fact, we have started long time ago and it is a fact that improvised music is not placed in the ghetto of before. I would like to be optimistic.

—Improvised music has certain movement and activity in Barcelona and in Catalonia: a) do you think that it is possible to talk of a 'school'? b) do you see a line of continuity (history) from the first Catalan 'contemporary' composers and c) is it (in activity, people and quality) at the same level than other countries that you know?

—a) It is true that there is a movement of improvised music in Barcelona. Moreover there is an organised movement called IBA (Improvisers from Barcelona) who organise very interesting private concerts and some public sessions open to musicians, people from the world of dance and public in general, where we play spontaneously, where the musical groups are organised and an improvised meal is shared in the middle of the session, of course. Every time is different, sometimes there are very interesting things going on, sometimes not much. I do not know if we can talk of a school, perhaps it is a bit earlier, the question is that musicians of different countries assist, some live in Barcelona and others pass by, and it is always very lively.

b) Do you refer to contemporary composers, don't you? Lately, in the Catalan Association of Composers a concert was organised presenting a key musical work by Arnold Schönberg and also a series of pieces by Catalan creators who were around this composer. It was said that any composer could really avoid Schönberg's influence in a given moment of his or her history as a composer, and this is so. Therefore, we could say that in a way or another, there is a part of the

present musical history of this country that stays in dodecaphonism. It is true, there are young composers who get out the school of music, and others less young who present works in a very conservative style. On the other hand, I know young contemporary creators who are breaking this tradition. Considering all this and the experts' opinion, we could say that there is an state of crisis. This is why there is a need to listen to other genres and other musical proposals, allowing the possibility of them to coexist.

c) I would start by improvised music. In Switzerland there is a very important movement of improvised music, having different centres, in Bern, Zürich, Luzern..., where there are orchestras, groups, associations, festivals, etc. They are much more organised than we are because there is also more tradition. In Germany, too; in France, although I know it less, and in the United Kingdom. In the Western countries there are different manifestations and genres of improvised music. A good part of performers of classical music practice regularly improvised music, something that there has never been heard.

In reference to contemporary music -what a way to name it- let me say that improvised music is also contemporary since it is produced at the present contemporary time. What a pity that the music of that time, that is already gone, was called like this! In reference to this music, we could say that it enjoys a better health in Austria, Germany and France. We have our starting point in our recent history and not so recent one, which has distanced us from different European musical movements. We are backwards the above named countries.

—Which would be the key authors in your education. Which paths follow your personal tradition (authors, movements, ideas...)?

—We will do a general list and we will leave some names that now I do not remember. But one of the first music that I remember is Scherezade (1888) by Rimskij-Korsakov (1844-1908). At home we had an LP and we frequently played it, there was not a great selection. We also listened to music of Wagner, Antonio Machín, Vivaldi... At school I listened to sacred music and I sang in the choir, and I saw the priests who played the organ. Later came the Beatles in my life and that freed me from the castrations produced by religion. At the same time appeared Albinoni, Johann Sebastian Bach, Albéniz, Falla and Granados. Also a good deal of jazz representatives: Dave Brubeck, Paul Desmond, Art Blackey and the melodic freedom of Hancock. Later: Satie, who invaded me during two years while I was in Switzerland. Bill Evans, Thelonius Monik, Herbie Nichols, Eric Dolphy and Cecil Taylor, who marked my musical learning while I was devoted to jazz. The music of India, Morocco, Madagascar and Haiti also influenced me.

Later came Igor Stravinsky while I still was entertained with jazz and that put everything upside down. I listened every day to the Rite of Spring. Still today I am influenced by that way of understanding music and right now, while I am writing this, I am listening to a recording I made just nine days ago in Huesca, with an orchestra of improvisers of 42 members that I directed because the result of this directed improvisation reminded me of certain moments and rhythmical situations, colours and sound masses that Stravinsky created in 1913.

Afterwards everything went by: Tue marvellous Mandarin (1919) by Béla Bartók (1881-1945), Bolero (1928) by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), Olivier Messiaen (1908-1992) and all his works and his rhythmical methods. Steve Reich, Miles Davis, Claude Debussy, Edgar Varèse, György Ligeti, Pièrre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen, John Cage, Henry Cowell. All them have influenced me, there is no doubt, in an intuitive way, and about some of them I investigated in my scores and

writings. Varèse more than Debussy, Ligeti more than Reich, but all of them have influenced me, I like all my girlfriends.

Later I felt an impact with very different things, like the pieces for piano or piano and voice by Aribert Reimann, the big spaces in the music by Morton Feldman, the reivindicative works by Frederik Rzewsky, the orchestral sounds by Hanspeter Kyburz (Lagos, Nigeria, 1960), Else (the scenic work by Josef Tal), Isang Yun, Adriana Hölzky, Sophia Gubaidulina, Galina Ustvolskaja, Somei Satoh. The electronic and piano works by Lutz Glandien, Arie Shapira and other authors that are in the repertoire of Agon Orchestra from the Czech Republic and which are quite unknown here, like Anestis Logothetis, Martin Smolka, and Daniel Goode.

In other arts, I like Michael Moore, Alberto Giacometti, Cy Twombly and Rothko. I give some references because perhaps it is important to contrast it with what I do, that is a genre of musical expression a bit barroque. In fact, I would like to improve it more, there is enough information, but this is the cross of the piano players, it is not easy to stop playing so many notes...

—Your musical investigation is a very personal path (at least it seems so). You have left the instrumental groups and play alone for a long time. Do you feel freer? Is it a way to do your own things without renunciation? Could you now play in a group?

—It is true, I am playing a lot alone. Why? I have some projects that I have created with the participation of other people, like "Radiografia de la nit" (3) for soprano, piano and video and electronics; or my project going on for several years with Walter Quintus, or the project with orchestras of improvisation, that I am just developing in Switzerland now. Or my project of treating the dialectal speeches of the Catalan language, together with the poets Carles Hac Mor and Ester Xargay, plus electronics and video. But the jazz quartets and all that do not exist anymore because it is not my style anymore. What is my style, which is all I am doing now, exists in small formations, like the ones I have described, or just in solo. I would like very much to participate in bigger projects, but I do not have time to create them now. I am very busy with all I am doing now; moreover there is a need of money to develop big projects. On the other hand, I do not receive offers from other musicians for collaboration works, I would be very pleased, and this is the truth. Nevertheless, my last work, *Un peu à gauche, svp*, returns to the pure roots of the piano solo, only with the help of special sounds produced by stones, but only in a short part of the piece. It is a challenge to play alone, one-hour non-stop and having only the piano, without objects or other complementary instruments as I use lately. I like it, I like it very much, I fell well offering something with an instrument that has been very much used and known and confirm that I still transmit what I want, it is fantastic. It is a way of doing my way, without renouncing to anything, this never.

—The piano, you frequently prepare it (before more than now, perhaps), usually you play it in an unorthodox way. These are aspects of a large tradition in contemporary music. Are you one of those who think that any sound of the instrument is valid, or one of those who think that it is necessary to go towards asceticism and such nakedness that you would only need the pure sound of the instrument? Are these two lines compatibles?

—I do not think about anything, I only have intuition, I investigate by curiosity and because I consider the piano like a toy, like when a child plays and does it very seriously. Therefore I prepare it and I discover things (not anymore now) that Cage did 60 years ago, or I do as Cowell did, and all these things that have not been overused so much, this is the truth. Especially here in Spain we do

not see concerts and performances in which things as the ones mentioned about prepared or manipulated pianos happen, whereas in Europe and America this happened for many years. Here the experience has been very scarce, so nobody should be shocked. You could ask Jean-Pi  re Dupuy, a pupil of Cage himself and a great pioneer of this school in Spain. Nobody else is known and in any case he limits himself to interpret those pieces by Cage and others, but he does not create new ones (I have a great steam and respect for what he does as a piano player and educator).

What does it mean the pure sound of the instrument? For example, in the piano, only the sound produced by the pressing of a key on the keyboard and the following percussion of the hammer under the rope? Well then I do not want only the pure sound. For me the asceticism is being sincere with an idea, and my idea is the piano and all what surrounds it. I would venture saying that I am an ascetic of the piano. All what I do with it I do not do it with anything else (or yes?). What I mean is that I am very much interested by the pure sounds or classic of the piano, using different resources of pressing and emission of sound through the different pedals. Moreover I use it with wealth. On the other hand I exhaustively use any kind of unorthodox sounds produced either with the hands on any part of the piano, or through objects and percussion sticks and the following manipulations and preparations like those of Cowell and Cage and many variations around this. Therefore, I am very much interested in both types of sonority and I mix them and combine them in a single piece if it is necessary, because it simply is a part of my catalogue of expressive tools.

—Usually you give concerts and courses outside Catalonia and abroad. This has permitted you to know by first hand the musical politics of other circles. At the same time you are president of the Catalan Association of Composers. You have, then, first hand information and experiences to judge the musical policy of this country and elaborate general proposals (formation, promotion, concerts, grants, recordings, festivals...). What can you say about it?

—This is perhaps the less pleasant question of all. I will try to be just. The cultural politics in Catalonia and Spain, but focusing mainly in Catalonia, should change radically. It is very paralysed, closed and there is no way to sell any proposal but the official ones. It is very difficult and there is no way to improve. Taking the example that I have commented above in reference to the seminar of improvisation for orchestras that I gave in Huesca, there was not any problem there to explain what I wanted to do, there was no problem to approve the proposal, neither to gather the students (42). The seminar was a success, it was previously documented on the newspapers, the radio and TV, and there were reviews after the last concert, which had a lot of audience. I am not talking about more developed places or where there are more possibilities, like Switzerland or Germany. But in Barcelona, the fashionable city, there has not been any school of music that accepted the project. I wanted to be just, but I will not avoid saying that at the end it is an old-fashioned and elitist attitude. I talk about my own experience; perhaps other players see it differently or are luckier than I am. The thing is that the musical policy in this country should make it easier for musicians, who are here for many years and who have produced abroad, to earn a living in their own country, at least when they stop here for a while.

Another important problem is that there are not circles for any kind of music, neither for rock, blues, jazz (perhaps there is a small circle), nor for new, old, classical music. What do musicians after having played in a place in Barcelona? There is the feeling as if they were starting again. You could finish playing on a stage such as Caixa Forum without receiving any bad review.

I would propose the existence of cultural rulers and managers, especially in the department of music, who deeply knew their field of specialisation and who were surrounded by experts, by counsellor musicians in the different fields of music. In the schools there should be the compulsory subject of music with more hours per week and with exams, and the teachers should be professional people in the field of music specialised in education. Students should regularly go to any kind of concert booked by the school organisation, and the competing institutions should pay for the tickets. At the music schools there should regularly be workshops and seminars on different musical styles and instrumental techniques and not what is usually done. In the summer courses this type of seminars on new music, improvised music, and so on and so forth, should be present and experts should give them. Entities should regularly receive help because, in fact, these entities are doing a task that should be competence of the cultural authorities. Networks and circles should be created. Small format auditoriums should be created, from 150 to 400 seats, with all the necessary resources for a theatre. With these infrastructures the city areas should be equipped. For example, in the Raval (4) in Barcelona, there is a new boulevard and everything, but there is not any small cultural place. The quarter theatres should be rebuilt and equipped. All these locals should have a piano, which does not cost more than an official luxury car, for goodness sake! The network should be expanded to the whole Catalonia, artists from different countries should have interchanges. There should be grants for people to do creative work that could be developed in the country or abroad, there should be grants for musical creation, this is still not known, politicians ask if it is a PhD in a musical school in a determined country... There should be economic help for recording and publishing records. Today it is ridiculous for an artist to have a good recording made in a studio or in a concert and not to publish it because of the lack of money. We know that nowadays the market is saturated, but to publish the last work it is a must, it is the introductory card for what you do. Moreover it becomes a document for history to decide. To keep the master at home is unacceptable from the side of the Administration. There should be more facilities, not only to the record companies that never publish a thing without a minimum dose of commerciality. Having to change the idea of the Administration about culture as a means of making money, is a very disgraceful historical error. It is necessary to show to the Administration that a people's culture is something else than the circles of influence. Festivals should receive more support, especially those of non-commercial music. The Contemporary Music Festival of Barcelona should receive economic and logistic support, in accordance to what a city like ours deserves. Some radio stations and some TV channels should broadcast regularly programs, during the hours of high audience, about contemporary music, new music, improvised music, with interviews, debates, emission of novelties, and experts should be on charge of these programs, making more informal and authentic interviews. There are good professionals on the radio, but there is always certain uneasy, I do not know how to express it, it is visceral and in my opinion it only happens in Barcelona, why is it so?

Summarising, the town councils, the Generalitat (5) and the Diputacions (6) should radically change their policies in benefit of what I have proclaimed previously.

—Plastic arts, scenic arts, literature... which relation (conceptual and of real work) do you establish between them?

—Before I have given some detail about some of my preferences for certain artists' works. I cannot tell that there is a real connection between my music and painting, but it is quite present in my work indeed, in a way or another. I will tell some of my first hand experiences with plastic arts. Since 1998 every summer I regularly visit the Fine Arts Academy of Trier, in Germany, where I always give a

concert and sporadically a workshop for plastic artists. One year I participated on a painting course during two weeks. The result was fascinating, I could not believe that I was able to devote myself to an art that I have never tried in a serious way, with such a complete intensity and passion, I finished being exhausted. I worked with acrylics, with wax, pigments, I tried to do engraving, and I left behind me a good collection of works. Expert painters have qualified two or three of them as professional works (excuse my lack of modesty). The most curious thing is that the majority of these works are very well finished and have a minimalist tendency, with almost uniform backgrounds like Rothko and some minimal motives, all much more simple than many musical works of mine, this is the antithesis of what I play. Perhaps, since I did not control the technique, I limited myself to what I could really control, I am not sure. Perhaps I had a vision less dominated by vices. It could be fine if I changed my skin by and by, it could be regeneration, I do not know how. I stand it, imagine I were the director of a culture department forever and for all the musical genres, what a horror!

In the same academy I have established a relationship with different artists who have collaborated with me, for example giving me sculptures on metal, which I have transformed into sounding objects. In fact they are sounding sculptures. There I have experienced art very closely, and I meet prestigious people such as the sculptor who recently died, Pierre Wéber, whose sculptures I used as an instrument of sound for a homage to him. Therefore between painting and my music there is a very straight relationship. A great number of my musical compositions have been created in Trier using tools of engraving, painting or sculpture, or the results obtained by the works of these arts. I do performance-music with that. It is an intuitive cathartic work.

In reference to video, lately I am working with this element that calls my attention very much, despite in some moment can take too much importance and capture too much attention, in detriment of music. It is something I am working with now, especially with a video artist who has many ideas and a huge professional background.

With scenic arts the relationship is less intense, but I take a lot of care (perhaps I should take more) with the scenic question of a concert, with set stage scene and playwriting. I have done some work for a theatre company, in which I myself played the role of a pianist on stage. Evidently some of my concerts are a show, they are theatre music.

Literature is another of the fields that has been open for me recently and which has captured me. I have collaborated several times with phonic poets and with artist who recite. Out of this experience some projects have been born, such as the one I am doing now with Carles Hac Mor, and the one I did with Americo Rodrigues.

—What about music for special occasions (for videos, or CD, exhibitions, etc.)

—I have prepared and created the music, together with my friend Andrés Lewin-Richter, for a painting exhibition, and in the vernissage I have played an instrument that the artist himself has created. I have never done this before and I am ready to do it again. I had the possibility to approach a very different audience, who is very much open to experiences of this kind, and to the informal atmosphere that a showing room gives, which facilitates communication. It was a pleasure to be able to bring sound materials to Lewin's studio for him to manipulate them.

For videos I recently received the first command for a short (I do not move in these territories and it is a pity) from an artist who is a friend of mine. The sound basis was a piano, played in an orthodox way (keys) or by biting different sticks on the strings, and later mixed in a studio and recorded as a master. The result was amazing; nobody was able to relate those images to the origin of the musical background. In other words, nobody thought that it was a piano. What images can do! I was amazed, I could repeat it tomorrow, it was a very creative experience, which gave a lot of freedom to act. I am very open to many things, as far as I decide about music, this is what I can do. I could not create the music for a musical, it is not my field. But I could create the background music for the underway... perhaps it could be accepted and then things would start changing. It is not necessary that I do it myself, any other musician who wanted to change things could do it.

**Víctor Sunyol**, writer and poet  
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Notes:

- (1) Catalan Association of Composers.
- (2) "X.Ray of the Night".
- (3) "X.Ray of the Night".
- (4) Popular quarter in Barcelona.
- (5) Local Government of Catalonia.
- (6) Local Government for the four provinces of Catalonia.