

CARNELEVARE

« TAKE OFF THE MEAT »



Photo : Antonio Crisponi, *Boes e Merdules il dominio sull'animale*, Festival Carrasegare, Sardaigne

BACHELOR'S RECITAL

CAMILLE ÉMAILLE PERCUSSIONS
CLASSE CHRISTIAN DIERSTEIN

11 JUIN 2018 1:30 PM
KLAUS LINDER SAAL
MUSIK AKADEMIE BASEL

PROGRAMME

SALVATORE SCIARRINO (*1947)

APPENDICE ALLA PERFEZIONE (1986)

FOR 14 BELLES 2'30

AURORE ÉMAILLE (*1990)

CAMILLE ÉMAILLE (*1993) MUSIQUE

ROVES (2018) 3'05

VIDEO

PIERLUIGI BILLONE (*1960)

MANI. MATTA (2008) 17'

FOR MARIMBA, 2 LOG DRUMS, WOODBLOCK, CHINA
GONG

AURORE ÉMAILLE (*1990)

CAMILLE ÉMAILLE (*1993) MUSIQUE

LUDUS (2018) 3'10

VIDEO

PETER EÖTVÖS (*1944)

THUNDER (1993) 5'

FOR BASS TIMPANI - SOLO FROM *TRIANGEL* (1993) FOR
ONE PERCUSSIONNISTE AND ENSEMBLE OF 27
INSTRUMENTS

TOM WEEKS (*1989)

TWO KNIVES (2018) 3'

FOR SNARE DRUM

AURORE ÉMAILLE (*1990)

CAMILLE ÉMAILLE (*1993) MUSIQUE

KARST (2012) 2'

VIDEO

JOHN ZORN (*1953)

GRIS-GRIS (2000) 9'

FOR 13 DRUMS AND ONE KICK DRUM

*Note : there won't be any break between the pieces during the
performance.*

FORWORD

“Carnival”, from the Latin “carne” and “levare”, means to remove the meat, the flesh. This term is no used as a common name for the pagan festivals and rituals which, depending on the region, take place between mid-January and the beginning of March. The Church, failing to prohibit the ancestral rites, revived them in order to integrate them into Christian beliefs. Thus, according to the Church, the Carnival celebrates the beginning of Lent, the observance of which involves abstinence from meat.

There is a different interpretation, however, which is more closely connected to the origins of these rituals. Dating back to antiquity, these rituals are above all festivals that overthrow the established order. During “The Sacred”, an annual Babylonian feast of the 2nd century BC, slaves took the places of their masters and vice versa. A man sentenced to death became king for 5 days before being executed (hence the tradition of burning the Carnival King at the end of the festival). “Remove the meat” could then refer to these customs where one “exchanged skin”. These practices were gradually prohibited and phased out. As the beginning of the year moved from March to January with the adoption of the Christian calendar, these festivals became the celebration of spring, renewal. However, the world and society must return to a primitive chaos before revitalizing themselves. It is this period of transformation, inversion, and confusion before the new equilibrium that is celebrated by these rituals. Man then puts on the habit of “the Wild Man”, his eccentric and animal counterpart, to let out his most repressed behaviors. Death, mating, dementia: all of these things normally considered taboo and “savage” are then staged with costumes, dances, and rituals.

In my artistic and instrumental practice, I search for this moment of chaos and confusion because it releases a very intense and deep poetic force. For me, art is a way to multiply the real. It is not a question of exiting reality to enter the imagination, but rather to reach other dimensions and perspectives which our civilized education has gradually caused us to forget. Often, these capacities of perception are instinctive, and still present with children. I therefore seek, through music and playing, to approach this state of perception and expression.

The pieces of this program, punctuated by the projection of the three short films by Aurore Émaille, are all related to this poetic force of transformation. Each is written for a single instrument group: a set of metals for *Appendice alla perfezione* by Salvatore Sciarrino, a set of wood for *Mani. Matta* by Pierluigi Bilonne, a set of skins for *Gris-Gris* by John Zorn. Peter Eötvös and Tom Weeks's works, *Thunder* and *Two Knives* respectively, are each focused on one instrument: in *Thunder*, the bass timpani, and the snare drum for *Two Knives*. With limited

timbral material, these composers approach the instrument in a new way, either by applying new playing techniques (P. Billone) or compositional techniques, such as the Sciarrino's fading, for us to discover a new angle of listening.



Photo : Alan Chies, installation DEM, *Padania del Sud*, 2010

A veritable process of transformation of matter is needed to disturb what is known and expected and, once chaos and confusion permit, to open new perspectives. The marimba in P. Billone's composition is approached in a way completely different from the common one. The notion of catharsis in carnival-type rituals is very much present in Tom Weeks' composition, and the attraction/resistance to primitive forces is one of the main motifs in *Gris-Gris* by John Zorn.

These reflections are broadened in the concert by the three videos from Aurore Émaille, *Roves*, *Ludus*, and *Karst*, which, through games of movement and light, echo the works which were just heard. Each episode of the triptych refers to notions present in carnival-type rites: the relation to the animal, to the primitive interior part of the man, the travesty, the fire... Finally, as the pieces presented take the inspiration directly from cinema (like *Gris-Gris*) or other forms of visual art (*Appendice alla perfezione* and watercolor, *Mani. Matta* and architecture), their alternation allows our senses to be confused, adapting our vision to the music and our hearing to the images, widening our perception.

WORKS

SALVATORE SCIARRINO (*1947)

APPENDICE ALLA PERFEZIONE (1986)

POUR 14 CLOCHES - 2'30

"I refuse the idea of dividing the world between the animate and the inanimate. For me everything is alive. "

Salvatore Sciarrino

Salvatore Sciarrino composes like a painter. Initially introduced to the visual arts, he later devoted himself to music, so we find in his compositions a watercolorist gesture, a way of bringing out colors by blurring sounds, highlighting other with the presence of "nothing", of white.

In this piece, *Appendice alla perfezione*, he uses 14 bells. Fourteen instruments that have the same timbre (one color): that of metal. However, these instruments are, by nature, always very different. The bells contain very rich and varied harmonics, and it is often difficult to recognize the fundamental pitch. S. Sciarrino thus plays with a multitude of sounds with microscopic variations. It creates a focus that allows one to hear the slightest detail, in order to reduce the sound to the essential. He plays with the light and the angle of view; by changing the playing technique within the same movement, he gives the impression of two things that are a priori identical, but which have been created in completely different ways, without a perceptible change. The pictorial character of this piece prefaces, in this concert, the work of Aurore Émaille, who plays constantly with shadows, light, and movement in her visual works, giving another dimension to the real and opening the imagination.

For me, the process of choosing the bells was similar to the work of a colorist. I wanted bells that are as varied as possible but that can also resonate together, without having to resort to a range of harmonic bells. I sometimes found bells which would sound very interesting alone, but did not find their places among the others. It was then necessary to change them, or to find out which other bell influenced them to sound out of place. It is really a blending of the colors into one another.

The bell is also an instrument and object with a very symbolic aspect. Present in most religious rituals of the world, it is one of the oldest instruments (the first in metal date from the Bronze Age).



Photo : Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann, Mamuthones*, Mamoiada, Sardinia, Italy



Photo : Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann, Tschäggättä*, Lötschental, Switzerland

The long resonance of its sound transports man to the divinities. A symbol of the voice of God, it drives out evil spirits, and announces all kinds of calls to the community: a call to reflection, to the time of mourning (Le Glad), of joy, or a simple alarm in the face of danger (fire, enemy); it is made to be heard by all and from afar. Bell-ringers in European traditions are often represented at carnival-type festivals and rituals. The bells make an incredible din to frighten wild beasts away from flocks of animals, as well as females and spectators. Wild men wear them on their backs, chests, or necks, accompanied by furs and bones of animals. The bell therefore has a role that can be reversed, on the border between the human and the divine, a mediator between the real and the mystical or the imaginary, belonging to both human and animal.

Appendice alla perfezione is a solo that was born from an earlier piece, *La Perfezione di uno spirito sottile* (1985) for flute, voice, and percussion.

PIERLUIGI BILLONE (*1960)

MANI. MATTA (2008) 17

FOR MARIMBA, 2 LOG DRUMS, WOODBLOCK, CHINA GONG

"This is what we have to offer you in its most elaborate form - confusion guided by a clear sense of purpose."

Gordon Matta Clark

Mani. Matta is a transformation piece. As much with the approach to the primary instrument, the marimba, as with the relationship between the musician and the instrument, Pierluigi Billone reverses the roles, reverses any habit or use. "Mani", which means "hands" in Italian, refers to a series of pieces written by the composer, such as *Mani. Giacometti* for string trio or *Mani. Gonxha* for Tibetan singing bowls, during which the music moves on the border between the instrument and the body. The hand is not just limited to its prehensile function, but holds what P. Billone calls the Intelligence of the hands. The hand meets the vibrating matter, which propagates in the bones and body of the musician. The resonance appears in and around the body, and creates a new sense of listening. To realize the piece, the musician enters into a dance induced by the movements of execution. This mixture poses the question: is it the player who plays the instrument, or the other way around?

By exploring the relationship between the sound source and the medium in a devious and profound way, P. Billone reverses our perception of reality. As in *Appendice alla perfezione* from S. Sciarrino, with whom P. Billone studied, the timbre of instruments is restricted (mainly to wood), allowing the composer to explore the resources of the instrument in depth, and the listener to the sound of the material in greater detail.

Indeed, *Mani. Matta* is certainly one of the rare marimba pieces (together with Alberto Posadas's (*1967) piece *Hylé* (2013)), where the instrument is apprehended more for its wooden material than for its melodic ability as a keyboard. Though the instrument is not as extensively prepared as in the piece by A. Posadas, it is adapted. Only the three lowest octaves are used (P. Billone's music is often concentrated in the lower register), and the others are replaced by wooden instruments with a less defined pitch: woodblock, log drum. Here it is the musician who is "prepared", as he/she carries on their chest a gong, which is played. So it really seems that we can no longer distinguish which is the musical instrument and which the performer.



Gordon Matta-Clark, *Day's End* (1975), New York“

Matta” refers to the American artist Gordon Matta-Clark (1943-1978), who was recognized for his architectural cutting works. On abandoned buildings, he made very large cuts to change the perception of the perspective of the building, or to allow light to enter in an unexpected place, revealing a different architectural image. The border between the real and the imaginary is then completely ambiguous, since we can see something “in reality”, which our brain does not associate with physical reality at all. P. Billone was inspired by this game with the perception of the listener to write Mani. Matta, and to recreate this confusion to broaden our sensitivity.

Another architectural work, that of the Richard Wilson (* 1953) *Turning the place over* (2008) echoes the works of Gordon Matta-Clark and Pierluigi Billonne.



Richard Wilson (* 1953), *Turning the place over* (2008), Liverpool.

PETER EÖTVÖS (*1944)

THUNDER (1993) 5'

FOR BASS TIMPANI- SOLO FROM TRIANGEL (1993) FOR A PERCUSSIONNISTE AND ENSEMBLE OF 27 INSTRUMENTS

"I try to describe the world with sounds in the exact same way that writers do with words, painters with brushes, filmmakers with the camera. We very often describe exactly the same things, only the medium is different. "

Peter Eötvös (2017)

"My compositions all have a narrative character; most often they are born of spoken language. What manifests itself in the themes of my plays but also through a certain penchant for very precise musical articulations. "

Peter Eötvös (2016)

If the music of Peter Eötvös is also closely related to visual art (he worked extensively for theatre with, among others Bob Wilson, Michael Grüber, Peter Brook, ...), it takes indeed a much more narrative dimension than do the works of S. Sciarrino and P. Billone. The title Thunder is already full of imagery. The piece is composed of very characteristic motifs which can be associated with mini songs or folk themes. The articulation of the sentences, the interchange of the rhythm between binary and ternary, and the clear structure of the parts recall the works for orchestra of Belà Bartók. This Hungarian composer greatly influenced Peter Eötvös in his vocabulary and musical language.

However, here the material used is again quite limited (to a very low timpani), unlike with B. Bartók, who uses the entire color palette of percussion at once. Peter Eötvös does not seek to explore the entire sonic capacity of this reduced material, but rather to make it sing, to speak like a storyteller, with an entire story from one voice. The cadenza, an improvised part at the end of the piece, leaves the musician free to express themselves through the musical language of the composer, as well as their own. There is then a real encounter, between the musician and the composer's music, like a legend that would be expressed in different versions from one storyteller to another, but still permitting the listener to allow their imagination to make its own interpretation.

TOM WEEKS (*1989)

TWO KNIVES (2018) 3'

FOR SNARE DRUM

"Listen to them, the children of the night. What music they make!" Count Dracula's declamation in Bram Stoker's book *Dracula* (1897)

Tom Weeks' music is primarily influenced by various African-American traditions, the historical avant-garde/experimental tradition, and the heavy metal and hardcore traditions. This young American composer and saxophonist, with whom I have the opportunity to collaborate, wrote this piece especially for this concert. He looks for manifestations of the extreme, in nuance as well as intention and energy, and one finds the influence of the philosophy and aesthetic of extreme metal (in particular that of the Norwegian "second-wave" black metal scene), if not in the sound of these compositions, in the musical attitude which he makes the musician adopt.

Drawing his inspiration from the history and culture of the European and Scandinavian medieval era, his pieces often refer to this universe (eg. *Fenrir* (2017) for wind ensemble, percussion, and electronics). Weeks seeks to return his music to its primitive ritualistic and magical form. Through complex techniques (here it is the speed of execution together with the cross stick technique) he seeks to arouse catharsis in the musician and listener by way of brutality. This approach is very present in many pre-Christian traditions and is sublimated especially during carnival type rites. The extreme behavior of men during those festivals, the possibility of becoming an animal, of returning to a primitive state, releases the tensions and restraints that life demands in society. Music, dance, and costumes are gateways to reverse the order established in a community's life. This reversal time is necessary to allow a new equilibrium to return. Rituals in European pre-Christian traditions have inspired many contemporary artists. This is particularly the case for John Zorn, another American saxophonist and composer, who had a major influence on the work of T. Weeks.

The piece *Two Knives* develops a simple material around rhythmic acceleration highlighted by glissendi, which echo the piece of P. Eötvös. Time widens around the material (the sentence is longer and longer) while accelerating with the decrease of silence between events. This creates a subtle tension that is released at the moment of improvisation.

JOHN ZORN (*1953)

GRIS-GRIS (2000) 9'

FOR 13 DRUMS AND ONE KICK DRUM

John Zorn's contemporary percussion pieces are relatively unknown in the academic world of percussion, yet *Gris-Gris*, a piece with relatively traditional writing and virtuosity, is a piece of great wealth. It is the work of a very atypical composer. Steeped in a wide variety of music, ranging from klezmer traditions to avant-garde and contemporary music, to hardcore punk and free jazz, John Zorn is an artist in the broadest sense. He himself was influenced by the musicians of the Association for the Advancement of Musical Creatives (AACM) from 1970-1980 in New York, and explored all forms of expression and composition. Composer of the famous piece *Cobra* (1984), he developed a way of writing and improvising with a community of musicians of his own. His saxophone playing style, as well as his virtuosic eclecticism in composition, have influenced many musicians and young composers in the United States and Europe.

His work is rooted in several mediums, including film, as is the case for *Gris-Gris*, which was inspired by a scene from Howard Hawks' (1896-1977) movie *To Have or Not to Have* (1944). The main characters, Bogie and Bacall, enter the "Zombie Bar" located in Martinique; in the center of the club, there is a woman dancing in front of the band. In this group, there is a percussionist playing furiously on a set of several drums with two big woolen mallets. It is a moment of poetry and strong magic.

Drums, like bells, are connected to magic. In shamanic traditions, the patterns played by percussionists invoke the gods; music has real power, that of healing and that of killing. The danger is therefore also present. Omnipresent is this ambivalence between the good and the bad, the real and the imaginary, the attraction and the fear. The piece is written for 13 drums, which represents the traditional "group" of witches (coven: clan of witches composed of 13 individuals), and a kick drum, which represents the *Ipsissimus* (the most liberated form of any existence in nature, including everything without discrimination with respect to quality or quantity between them, being and non-being together). It is mainly inspired by Korean shamanic drums and Haitian Voodoo - hence the title *Gris-Gris*. *Gris-Gris* is an amulet of protection that can take different forms (doll, bag of herbs, stones, and various objects). It is considered one of the most powerful protective forces in Voodoo.

It is this concept that John Zorn tries to convey in the piece. Each section tells a story of continuous mystery and tension, up to a climax where the force deployed to overcome the power of Gris-Gris finally yields, as a liberating effect. Dramatic and virtuosic, the music is composed of complex polyrhythms, hypnotic grooves, and physical technical issues that push the musician to tap into their internal forces. The piece was written for percussionist William Winant, with whom I had the honor of working at Mills College (California).



Photo : scene from the movie *To Have Or Not To Have* (1944) directed by Howard Hawks

AUORE ÉMAILLE (*1990)

CAMILLE ÉMAILLE (*1993) MUSIQUE

ROVES - LUDUS (2018) - KARST (2012) 2'

VIDEO

"We live in the image we have of the world. Each of us lives in a different world, with different spaces and different times. "

Alejandro Jodorowsky

Aurore Émaille works with movement. Regardless of medium (video, puppet, or shadow theatre), her work is very sensitive to the gap between what we see and what we think we see. She manages, in the manner of S. Sciarrino, to concentrate the eye on a detail, on a movement, to open a visual dimension that is imperceptible on any other scale. In her videos, she always begins with real images, but by working with the lights, shadows, framing (often very close), and movement, she makes us see reality from another angle, which I here programmed in parallel with the work of P. Billone. Poetry has a very important place in these images. She prefers suggestion to narration, reinforcing the mystery rather than giving answers. By giving workshops, she has exchanged and created with a wide variety of audiences, ranging from children in boarding schools to prisoners and people with intellectual disabilities. Thus, her approach to stimulate creativity and brighten the imagination of everyone is very virtuosic.



Aurore Émaille : *faune étrange*, shadow theater

This triptych, Roves - Ludus - Karst, was born as a result of the will to give a precedent to the film Karst, which was created in 2012. We wanted to continue to work together and to further develop this universe.

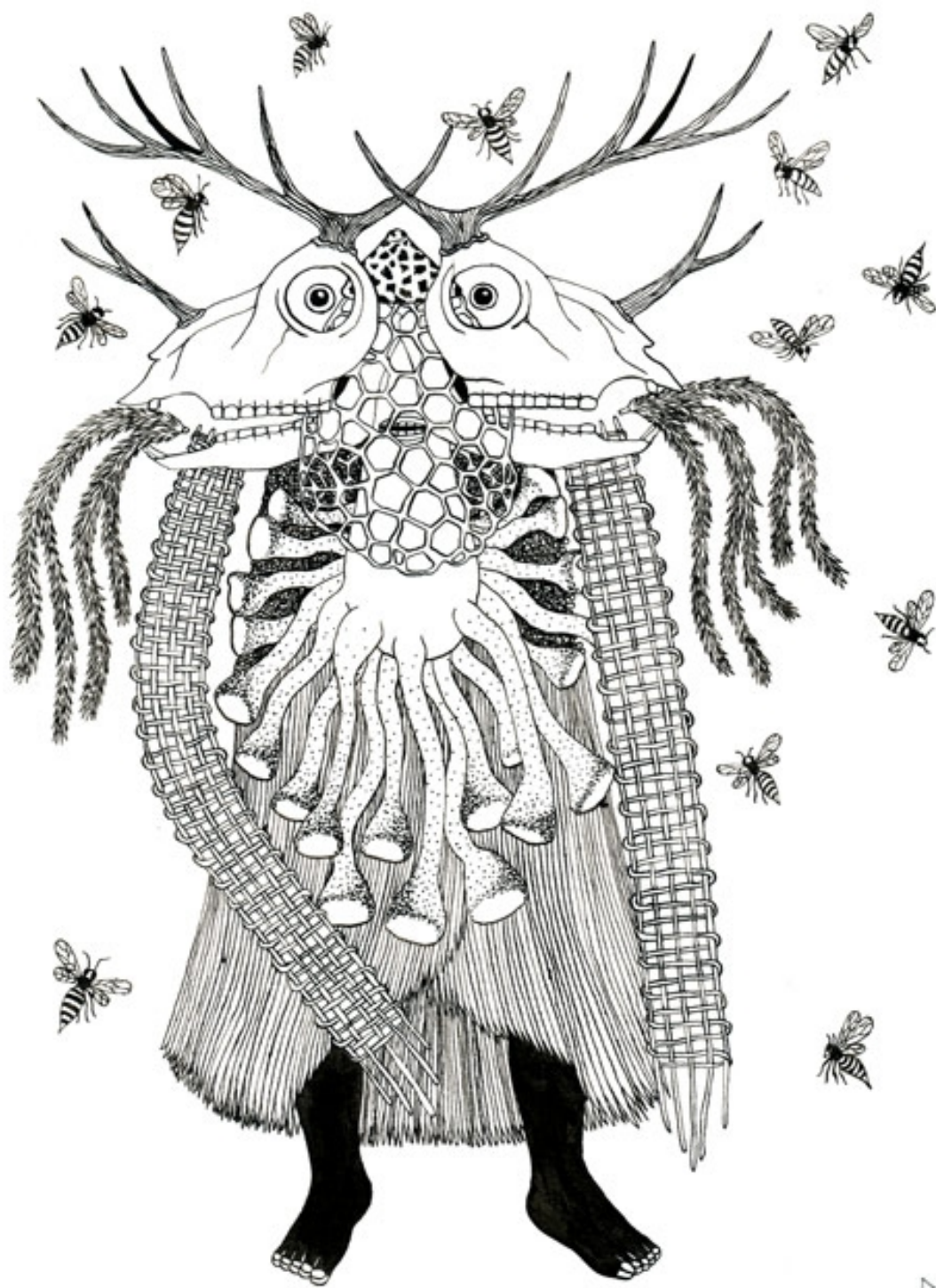
The Roves are a very old breed of goats. Legends say that they swam to the small village of Rove near Marseille after the sinking of a Phoenician ship from Mesopotamia. Many myths and symbols are attributed to the goat. Associated with Zeus, of whom the goat was the nurturer in Greek mythology, it represents freedom and emancipation, and gives strength to the gods and warriors by feeding them with her milk. Later, in the Middle Ages and following the adoption of Christianity, the goat took on a more negative connotation. Its independence and impulsive temperament gave birth to the word “capricious”, from capri. The goat, formerly a symbol of protection and fertility, driving out the darkness, became, with all the prohibitions attributed to sexuality by the Church, the expiatory animal par excellence, the “scapegoat” whose sacrificed blood purifies humans of their sins. In this first episode, A. Émaille enters the universe of the animal, its environment and its movements, and caresses the forms and the matter: horns, hair, leaves... This first film really echoes the quote from Salvatore Sciarrino, for whom there is no difference between the animate and the inanimate. The use of these animal materials is widespread in traditional European winter festivals. Man enters the skin of the animal. He thus assumes the powers of liberty and emancipation possessed by the animal.

It is this appropriation and reversal of roles that we find in the second video, Ludus. It is a Latin term for the games of adult entertainment. This short film was made in a Specialized Education Institution in Strasbourg, where A. Émaille was working with children to make a carnival centering around the theme of fire (The preponderant element of the pagan rituals from which the carnival descends). The child appropriates his real environment, and uses his references and his personal imagination to express himself freely. There is a form of poetry in this process, something of the nature of the instinctive improvisation prompted by the artist. The child tells stories, invents scenarios and characters with a succession in which the logic sometimes exceeds the capabilities of adults. That is why this film appears here just before the pieces of P. Eötvös and T. Weeks. Once the reality is questioned, or at least approached from a wider angle, the narrative and expressive imagination can start to work, without censorship or restraint, accepting what is born of the moment and of the heart, from the innate as of the acquired.

Karst, the final part of the triptych but the first to be created, refers to the geomorphological structure which results from the erosion of rocks. These structures keep the memory of the Earth, testifying to changes and the passage of time. Carnival is a ritual of transformation, following the movement from one equilibrium to another. Each ritual, each experience, is limited; it allows everyone to come back to reality. However, when we wake up, we have been changed, consciously or not; the real world as we perceived it is now slightly different. When we look at the work of an artist like Gordon Matta-Clark, we know from the context that this is an artistic experience with a definite intention. Without our knowing it, this experience has left a trace, and we will no longer see the things of reality in exactly the same way. In the cave, man turns toward his own interior, and sees himself from within. There is no longer any certainty, but also no doubt; on the contrary, there are just more possibilities, points of view, nuances of shadows and light, poetry.



Photo : Alan Chies, installation DEM, *Padania del Sud*, 2010 - 2011



Drawing: *Capro con vespe*, DEM.

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Photo : Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, *Perchten*, Werfen, Austria

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Finally and always, thank you with all my heart to my family and to all non-human living beings.



Photo : Antonio Crisponi, *Boes e Merdules il dominio sull'animale*, Festival Carrasegare, Sardinia