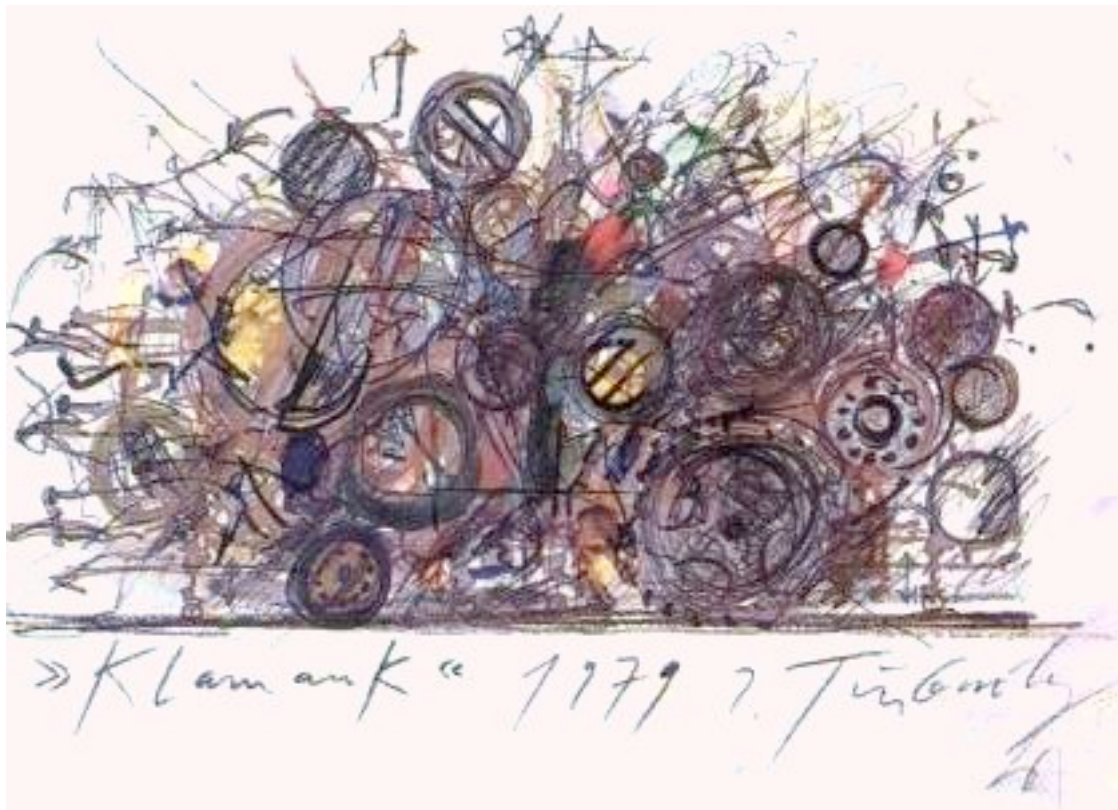


Christian Meaas Svendsen

Machina

(To Jean Tinguely)



Sketch by Jean Tinguely

INSTRUCITONS

Background

“Machina” is dedicated to the Swiss painter and sculptor Jean Tinguely (1925-1991). Jean Tinguely is renowned and famous for his sculptural machines and monumental art, and was a part of the dadaist- and new realism movement. His art satirized the mindless overproduction of material goods in the western industrial society.

His machines are often, not always, intricate and complicated constructions. A typical Jean Tinguely-machine is a machine that doesn't have any practical function outside of it's own system. It doesn't create or destroy anything and it does not interfere with its surroundings. It is totally indifferent to the outside world, thus it's only true function is being and fulfilling itself.

The Conditions

“Machina” consists of small pieces which each try to represent the characteristics of Tinguely's machines. Regardless of the style or characteristics of each piece, the conditions for all of the pieces are as following:

- Little or no development within each voice and each piece as a whole
- Little or no intentional interaction between the different voices
- Each voice is a sequence, a musical “gear”, which repeats itself with little or no variation

The Building Blocks

Because of the strict conditions, the pieces each represent a state, one thing, and like Tinguely's machines, the music doesn't seek anything outside it's own construction. These constructions, the actual compositions, are all based on three main buliding blocks:

- written material/instructions
- aleatoricism
- free improvisation/instant composing

Written Material/Instructions

The written material and the instruciones are intensions from the *composer* to give the piece a certain character, but even though the pre-defined material is set, there is still room for interpretation. Also, sometimes the composer's intension is to give the performers a chance to shape the outcome, hence there is a dynamism between the written material and the improvised aspect.

Aleatoricism

In “Machina” The aleatoric aspect does not equal complete randomness, but is a synthesis of the actual concept/composition and the intuition of the performers. This synthesis allows the performer to interact with the composition (and vice versa) with the help of compositional tools, and not merely out of intuition alone. These aleatoric “tools” are:

- optional notes - notes and sequences in parantheses are optional to play. They appear in sequences and can be played or left out at every repeat. The performer adds randomness which in turn alter the interaction inbetween the voices.
- Machina cards - When the instruction “pick a Machina-card” applies, the performer is set to improvise a repeated sequence based on the information on the card. Each card holds an illustraion of a mechanical gear, and each gear differs in size and complexity. The size of the gear determines the lenght of the sequence, while the complexity determines the sequence’s complexity, e.g. amount- and/or variety of sounds within the sequence. Contrary to the *optional notes*, the Machina-cards is the composition’s way to add randomness through the performer. Because the player doesn’t know what the card instructs before it is picked, the outline for the composition is not known before the moment it has been constructed.

Free Improvisation/Instant Composing

At times, the performers are instructed to improvise something which is not restrained by either note material or by the use of a *Machina-card* (it can be restrained by other instructions however). Even though the performer is free to come up with whatever, the *conditions* can not be overrided. In other words - the performer invents the “gear” and hence *instant composing* is perhaps a better term than *free improvisation*.

Result

A consequence of all this is that each piece will remain it’s certain characteristics, but emerge different each time it is performed. The point is that this happens not (just) becuase of by whom or where they are performed (external conditions in general), but because of the nature within each composition.

Credits

A special thanks to Kasper Skullerud Værnes who introduced me to Jean Tinguely’s work, and of course to Jean Tinguely who spent most of his life creating these wonderful machines. They are a true example that art doesn’t change anything by itself, but that it can trigger people to react and act through direct experience with it.

THE PIECES

Following is a brief runthrough of the pieces, highlighting some important aspects of each piece. At the very end a nomenclature is provided.

Nr. 1

- Bass and cello create a Shepard note-effect by playing an overlapping ascending glissando. This effect creates an auditive illusion of an everlasting ascending line.
- The chords in the clarinet are arpeggiated, but with in a relaxed slow/medium slow (approx. quarters) and steady pulse. They are paired together in two sets of brackets, and the player can move from one set to another where indicated from the second highest note to the highest note. The effect of the line as a whole compliments the effect of the bass and the cello

Nr. 2

- All rhythmic values must be precise and clear. The start of each note should have a clear accent, and the ending a clear cut-off.
- Dynamics are free

Nr. 3

- Cello: the correct execution of the written intervals and duration of each note are not crucial, largely because they are hard to perceive as pitches. What is important is that the quality of the sound has some movement.

Nr. 4

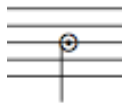
- All rhythmic values must be very precise and clear

Nr. 5

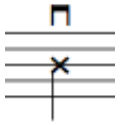
- The most rudimentary expression of the concept.

LEGEND:

If there are symbols among the pieces that are not listed here, an instruction is added in the given piece



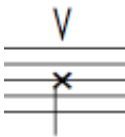
- The sound "Dosh" with an accent and in combination with the written pitch



- Exhale

Tbn: Upper line = upper reg., middle line = middle reg., lower line = lower reg.

Trp: Press down the valves for the written note, but play with air only



- Inhale

Tbn: Upper line = upper reg., middle line = middle reg., lower line = lower reg.

Trp: Press down the valves for the written note, but play with air only



- Slap-tounge



- Bow scrape on given strings



- Bow on body

Upper line = upper bout, middle line = waist, lower line = lower bout

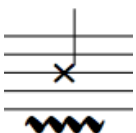


- Tap the instrument with finger

Upper line = upper bout, middle line = waist, lower line = lower bout



- Falling sound, with air (like a sigh)



- Flutter. Combination of air and the written pitch



- Muted artificial harmonics: Use the thumb and the third finger to produce the harmonic on the fourth from the note pressed down by the thumb. The first and second finger are placed inbetween the thumb and the . The result should be an airy noise. Light bow pressure and sul ponticello.