

das mollsche gesetz
CATALOGUE OF IMPROVISATION
WERGO

More noise has been made about silence than most other things in the music world. And actually it doesn't even exist. John Cage himself, who initiated the whole discourse with his famous 4'33" in 1952, remarked that even in a room devoid of sound, he could still perceive the humming of his bloodstream and the soft whistling of his nervous system. Therefore even 4'33", the mother of all musical silence, is not by any means soundless. While a musician makes not a single sound on the stage for 4 minutes and 33 seconds, you hear a whole lot: your own breath, maybe the air conditioning system, the rustling beside you and the coughing behind you. Silence is an idea, not a state.

And authority can't change anything about this. Udo Moll, Matthias Muche and Sebastian Gramss, the originators and executors of the Mollsche Gesetz, cleverly don't even allow themselves to get caught up in such tiring debates on basic principles. If, according to the first paragraph of the Gesetz (German: law), music is made for up to 60 seconds, then, according to the second paragraph, an equally long pause follows. And of course it's not silence. The music simply stops and waits. Or better: it quietens down. The nice word "quieten" actually expresses almost exactly what it's about: It's about containing oneself, making space, allowing time. But for what?

When Moll, Muche, Gramss and their guests place their instruments down following a short act, you become aware of multiple things. First of all, how long a minute can be. Especially when you are waiting, waiting for the next piece. This prescribed quietness is anything but lost time. It is, if you think about it, completely filled, namely with reverberation and expectation: what just happened, what might come? Even the very first pause gives rise to this type of question mark. Starting the stopwatch, which is visible for musicians and audience alike, does not serve to start the music, but is the pickup for the first pause. It may even be the most important of all, because it makes unmistakably clear that the pauses are not just gaps, which divide up a continuum, but effectively units of experience in their own right. And they are, in the true sense intended by Cage, musical through and through, but this music is not playing on the stage, but in the audience members' own minds.

But it would be doing the Mollsche Gesetz itself an injustice to reduce it to the second paragraph alone. After all, the law not only regulates the time in which no music is played, but also the time in which music is actually played. In contrast to the pause, the space the law gives the musicians to design as they please seems relatively tight. No more than 60 seconds per piece. Is this too little to make music? By no means, as one can clearly hear! With and within 60 seconds, you can do a lot. Alone or as a duo, trio, quartet or quintet moving here and there, carefully and slowly warming to each other or joining in together all at once. And one can even do all that without rushing oneself. Moll and his law enforcers are never in a hurry. One is more likely to be surprised at how much time they take even though it seems that so little is allowed. Maybe, one may be inclined to think in one of the many pauses, free musicians and free people in general are not those who live without laws. But maybe they are those who move within the bounds of the law as if there were none at all.

(Raoul Mörchen 2008)

Das mollsche gesetz (english : molls law) was established in the summer of 2004 as an improvisational research project. Two significant laws have been applied to the work:

1. no piece lasts longer than 60 seconds
2. each piece is followed by a break of the same length (as the piece itself...)

These simple yet radical rules change to a profound extent the way that music is created, but also how it is perceived by the audience. On stage the format requires the greatest possible degree of clarity and precision as well as quick decision making. In the auditorium it requires focusing on the moment (the perceived

present lasts 30 seconds) and increases the likelihood of becoming unnerved, thus resulting in a sharpening of the senses. The breaks invite the audience to shift its focus from finite to infinite and they serve as resonance space in time.

Following the headline „**catalogue of improvisation**“, das mollsche gesetz arranged a 6-part concert series in 2007. the basic idea was to give the audience the possibility to experience six quite diverse approaches towards improvisation in music. thanks to the constant aesthetic factor represented by the mollsche gesetz, the individual approaches of the guests are provided with a clear framework which makes them comparable with insight. additionally, for each concert the basic parameters of improvisation, such as time structure for sound and silence, choice of material etc, are negotiated anew with the guest of the evening. the guests represent very diverse genres of current musical activities : experimental minimal-techno (institut für feinmotorik), New York Downtown-Avantgarde (elliott sharp), contemporary music (tilbury, de alvear, mitterer), media arts (negrón/orozco) and avantgardistic skandinavian vocal experiments (endresen). this variety is complemented by the mollsche gesetz with its clear conceptual framework. the audience experiences the creation of music at its origin. by revealing the most important parameters, the mollsche gesetz creates an additional intellectual excitement to follow the course of the sounds.

integral part of the „catalogue“ is a documentation which consists of a lavishly designed catalogue with cd. all concerts were accompanied by an internationally renowned photographer (Philip Lethen) and a music journalist (Raoul Mörchen), who contributed photos and essays for the catalogue. all concerts were meticulously recorded, the highlights are published on this cd.

das mollsche gesetz : catalogue of improvisation

- 01komitzu 1:19
- 02NYMS pt4 1:03
- 03tsuki no monogurui 1:19
- 04klehafter 1:32
- 05hatsugatsuo 3:06
- 06NYMS pt8 4:28
- 07convatten 1:18
- 08Bascha 3:01
- 09yozakura 1:53
- 10daikan 1:16
- 11Manti 2:13
- 12miham 1:34
- 13krakuz 0:30
- 14Blini 3:10
- 15surfaces 4 1:55
- 16tal para qual 1:18
- 17Watrushki 6:50
- 18automi 1:57
- 19Kwaß 2:06
- 20tarant 1:04
- 21liwu 1:28
- 22asta su abuelo 1:32
- 23smorga 1:21
- 24shijo noryo 2:12
- 25que viene el coco 1:45
- 26Schtschi 1:43
- 27Bitki Po 1:17
- 28funasobi 1:33
- 29hilan delgado 1:44

30signi 1:16
31Blintschiki 5:12
32tasogare no zu 1:38
33weii 1:53

2 & 6 by eliott sharp (zOaR music - BMI)
15 by wolfgang mitterer
1 / 4 / 7 / 12 / 18 / 21 / 23 / 30 / 33 by moll / gramss / muche / tilbury
13 / 20 by moll / gramss / muche / sharp
3 / 5 / 9 / 10 / 24 / 32 by moll / gramss / muche / endresen
8 / 11 / 14 / 19 / 26 / 31 by moll / gramss / muche / mitterer
16 / 22 / 25 / 29 by moll / gramss / muche / de alvear
17 / 27 / 28 by moll / gramss / muche

udo moll	trumpet, harmonium,electronics
sebastian gramss	double bass
matthias muche	trombone
maria de alvear	voice
john tilbury	piano
elliott sharp	guitar, clarinet
wolfgang mitterer	organ, electronics
sidsel endresen	voice
institut für feinmotorik :	
marc matter	turntables
florian meyer	turntables
daniel van den eijkel	turntables

produced by udo moll
recorded 2007 live by markus braun & janosch brenneisen
mixed by wolfgang stach at maarweg studio 2
mastered by olaf dettinger
artwork by gudrun barenbrock

www.dasmollschegesetz.de