

Carl Unander-Scharin • Åsa Unander-Scharin

TCP/Indeterminate Place Quartet

MONTEVERDI'S LAMENT

Erik Westberg

Vocal Ensemble

Conductor Erik Westberg



Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble and Organ Acusticum. Photo: Mattias Löw



Monteverdi's Lament

This album presents two contemporary works that reimagine poetry and music connected to the legacy of Claudio Monteverdi. By placing these 17th-century sources in dialogue with interactive technologies and the hyperorgan (a pipe organ equipped with digital control functions that enable performance without the use of a keyboard), the project invites the listener to experience the creative friction between

old and new that defined Monteverdi's music in the early 1600s, seeking also to highlight its expressive power in a present-day setting. The two works were created as part of Music of the Indeterminate Place, an artistic research project exploring telematic performance, interactivity, and—most notably—the remote control of hyperorgans.

Stefan Östersjö



TCP/Indeterminate Place Quartet. Photo: Nikolaus Brade

TCP/Indeterminate Place Quartet

Formed in 2021 within GEMM (Gesture, Embodiment and Machines in Music)—a research cluster led by Stefan Östersjö at the Piteå School of Music, Luleå University of Technology—the quartet explores the artistic potential in the creation of interactive systems for hyperorgan performance. Its members are: Robert Ek, clarinet and interaction design, Stefan Östersjö, MIDI guitar and interaction design, Mattias Petersson, live-coding, modular synthesizers and interaction design and Federico Visi, Sophtar and interaction design. Their 2021 NIME-performance was awarded the Best Music Award of the conference.

TCP/IP may be known as the foundational protocol suite of the Internet, but in the ensemble's name, "TCP" denotes the neologism *Tele-Copresence*—a fusion of telepresence and copresence that underscores our focus on felt presence within telematic performance. *Indeterminate Place* refers to the mediated experience of space in tele-copresence—a liminal realm shaped not by a single location but by multiple overlapping and converging sites. At times, these distributed spaces coalesce into what we call an Indeterminate Place—a hybrid environment where physical and virtual presence intertwine.

The two pipe organs

Built by Gerald Woehl and inaugurated in 2012, the Studio Acusticum organ in Piteå is one of Scandinavia's largest pipe organs, featuring 91 stops across six divisions and fifteen wind-chests. Conceived by Hans-Ola Ericsson, its

design combines historic European traditions with modern innovations, enabling performances of Baroque, symphonic, and contemporary repertoire. The instrument offers a mix of French and German timbres, with four man-

uals and pedal connected via tracker action, complemented by electric couplers and MIDI control. Known as the “organ of the future,” it was created to inspire new sonic experiments while preserving the richness of organ heritage. The Acusticum organ is a monumental instrument that has also constituted the point of departure for the experimental work of the TCP/IP Quartet since the early 2020s.

The Chapel of Reconciliation in Berlin stands on the former “death strip” of the Berlin Wall and was built using remnants of the original neo-Gothic church destroyed in 1985. Its organ, installed in 2017 by Karl Schuke, was

designed to symbolize reconciliation, incorporating timbres representing the four Allied nations: Vox Coelestis (USA), Basson Hautbois (France), Open Diapason (UK), and a unique bayan-inspired stop for Russia. The instrument features 27 stops across two manuals and pedal, with electric key action and MIDI control, except for the bayan stop, which is manual-only. Its gentle tonal character was designed to complement the meditative atmosphere of the chapel. On the album, it provided a timbral contrast to the Acusticum organ and contributed most of the organ music in the continuo playing.

Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble

The Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble was formed in 1993 and consists of 16 to 20 singers. The members of the Ensemble work as soloists, church musicians and music teachers and hail from northern Sweden. The Ensemble has commissioned and premiered over 60 pieces by composers such as Gunnar Eriksson, Paula af Malmborg Ward, Tebog Monnagotla,

Jan Sandström, Sven-David Sandström, Carl Unander-Scharin and Arvo Pärt.

The Swedish Broadcasting Corporation has aired several live performances in close collaboration with the Ensemble, both in Sweden and throughout Europe.

In 1996, the Ensemble’s first CD *Musica Sacra* was released on the Opus3 label. The

Ensemble's first collaboration with Studio Acusticum Records in 2010 resulted in the triple album *Pater Caelestis – Terra Mater – Vox Humana*. Since then, the Ensemble has recorded more than 15 CDs issued by the record companies Opus3, Studio Acusticum Records and Naxos. *Vita Nuova*, featuring Swedish choral music, was rated “world class” by the music magazine OPUS. In 2020, the Ensemble made its debut on the LP medium with a live recording of Bach's monumental B-minor Mass and

the same year the Ensemble was the first choir ever to be awarded the Swedish Society of Composers's Interpreter Prize.

The Ensemble has undertaken more than 30 international tours to Europe, North and South America, Asia and Oceania. A particularly notable engagement was the project Choral Singing for Peace and Justice which included a tour to Tonga and Samoa at the turn of the millennium, seen by more than 500 million viewers worldwide.

Erik Westberg, conductor

(b. 1956) studied choral conducting with Eric Ericson at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm 1976–1987. He has been the director of numerous choirs, including the YMCA Choir in Stockholm, the Oslo Philharmonic Choir, the Swedish Youth Choir and guest conductor of the Swedish Radio Choir.

Internationally, Erik Westberg has been engaged as guest conductor for Pro Coro Canada, Coro Nacional de España, Coro Sinfônica do Estado de São Paulo, and Jauna Muzika,



Photo: Mattias Löw

Lithuania. He has also been Artist-in-Residence at Wollongong University, Australia.

Erik Westberg has received a number of awards, including the Johannes Norrby-Medallion, Choral Conductor of the Year and the Culture Prize of the Year.

In 2006 Erik Westberg was presented with His Majesty the King's Medal of the Eighth Size with the ribbon of the Order of the Seraphim

“for significant achievements in Swedish musical life”. In 2016 he was awarded the Grant of Honour and Merit of Norrbotten County.

He has been a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music since 2008 and Professor of Choral Conducting and Choral Singing at the School of Music at Luleå University of Technology since 2003.

Lamento e più (2023)

LYRICS Ottavio Rinuccini (1562–1621)

PUBLISHER Electronic Opera Publishing

Carl Unander-Scharin's composition *Lamento e più* takes its starting point from the libretto by Ottavio Rinuccini for the lost opera *Arianna*, set to music by Claudio Monteverdi in 1607. The only surviving musical fragment from this opera is the famous aria “Lasciatemi morire”—also known as “Lamento d’Arianna”. The original libretto, which survives in its entirety, contains other fascinating texts surrounding this aria—texts that Monteverdi once set for choir in the now-lost opera.

Created in collaboration with choreographer and dancer Åsa Unander-Scharin, the 2023 composition *Lamento e più* explores the expressive qualities of the 17th-century text through the use of polyphonic layers and contrapuntal processes — both in time and space. This is achieved through compositional techniques such as fugati, rhythmic overlays with tempo-independent loops of varying duration, as well as through the use of interactive technology. Together with Federico Visi, a member

of the GEMM cluster at LTU, an application was developed based on the Icelandic technology Genki Wave (interactive wireless rings equipped with gyroscopes) and the Max for Live software, enabling the dancer to play the Organ Acusticum at specified measures in the composition through mid-air gestures. Sections of organ music, performed live by the dancer, are distributed throughout the work—sometimes as soloistic passages, and sometimes in layers where the dancer-performed organ and the choir proceed at independent tempi. The interaction between choreography, the hyperorgan, and the choir forms a large-scale polyphony.

Opera Mecatronica

Opera Mecatronica is a collaboration between Carl and Åsa Unander-Scharin that begun in 1998, when they created the world's first choreographed industrial robot, *The Lamentations of Orpheus*. Since then, Opera Mecatronica





*Carl Unander-Scharin and
Åsa Unander-Scharin. Photo: Mats Bäcker*

has toured widely, including appearances at Operadagen Rotterdam (2012), Paris (2013), Cape Town Opera (2013), Toronto (2014), the Liszt Academy (Budapest, 2014), Helsinki (2015), San José (2016), and The National Opera in Rijeka (Croatia, 2019).

One of Opera Mecatronica's highlights was creating a performance in honour of Stephen Hawking during his high-profile visit to Stockholm in 2015.

Ahi miserabil caso, ah fero inganno,
pur troppo di pietà degno e di pianto;
ma che segui dopo cotanto affanno?
Lasciate mi morire! E che volete voi?
Che mi conforte?
In così dura sorte, in così gran martire?
In van lingua mortale, in van porge conforto,
dove infinito è il male!

In December 2022, their opera *The Tale of the Great Computing Machine* premiered at their “home stage”—the Reactor Hall (R1) at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, in a sold-out run that drew warm reviews from the press and audience.

www.operamecatronica.com

www.electronic-opera.com

*Ah, lamentable fate, ah, cruel deceit,
all too worthy of pity and tears;
but what can follow such grief?
Let me die! What do you want?
Would you comfort me?
In such a stern lot, in so great a torment?
In vain; mortal words. In vain; comfort offered,
where suffering is infinite.*

TRANSLATION *Martin Fabian*

Sestina (c. 1610)

LYRICS Scipione Agnelli (1586–1653)

PUBLISHER Manuscript and Möselers Verlag, Wolfenbüttel

Reimagining a 17th-Century Masterpiece Through Algorithmic Real-Time Recomposition

Claudio Monteverdi's *Sestina*, a madrigal in the poetic form of a sestina titled "Lagrima d'amante al sepolcro dell'amata" (Tears of a lover at the tomb of his beloved), is one of the most dynamic, and deeply expressive, laments in the composer's output. Likely written in 1610 and published in 1614 in his sixth book of madrigals, it sets a poem by Scipione Agnelli—a meditation on the shepherd Glauco's grief at the death of the young singer Caterina Martinelli, comprising six stanzas whose final words recur in a reordered pattern, like fragments of a broken mirror. A sestina follows a strict, algorithmic pattern of end-word repetition: six stanzas of six lines each, capped by a three-line envoi (a short concluding stanza). The six end words from the first stanza recur

in a prescribed order throughout the poem, with the envoi incorporating all six words—two per line. Monteverdi mirrors this architecture in a setting which combines homophonic rhetoric and polyphonic complexity throughout six sections and a final envoi—a gesture of closure that distills the lament into three lines. At times, the counterpoint breaks the poem's formal structure to achieve greater expressive depth.

In this interpretation of Monteverdi's *Sestina*—created by the TCP/Indeterminate Place Quartet in collaboration with Åsa Unander-Scharin and the Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble—the madrigal becomes a dynamic interface for real-time recomposition. The original madrigal is presented in a further expanded framing, which revisits some structural features of the original piece. These include many of the madrigalisms—typical of Monteverdi's late compositional style—and, above all, its combinations of homophonic and contrapuntal

textures. Co-composed by the members of the TCP/IP Quartet, the piece uses an algorithmic “reading” of the score, inspired by the structure of the text, to enable live interaction between MIDI guitar, augmented clarinet, sensors and hyperorgans.

The algorithm controlling the hyperorgans was implemented in the programming language SuperCollider, converting a MIDI score representation of Monteverdi’s composition into interactive patterns. These patterns allow real-time manipulations—such as transposition, note substitution and articulation. In this way, the original score becomes a fundamental component in an interactive system. On each trigger, the algorithm advances a set number of beats, then pauses; the next trigger resumes from the same point, enabling fluid, responsive recomposition. A key principle in expanding the Sestina’s form is the use of the interactive system to create instrumental interludes between choral sections that reflect the vocal material just heard.

Two shorter movements act as preludes—the first introducing the entire piece and

the second preceding the sixth vocal part. The quartet also interacts sparingly with the choir, functioning as a fragmented continuo by using selected bars from the original score for hyperorgan interaction. The idea of the instruments all forming a *continuo* group also inspired experimentation with turning the electric MIDI guitar into a quasi-acoustic instrument by feeding its signal into an invention from the 1970s by the Swedish luthier Georg Bohlin, called the “tonbord”. Hereby, the solid-body electric guitar is given a physical sounding body in the space, and becomes a naturally integrated part of the two organs and the clarinet. For the performance of the piece, Federico Visi designed an assemblage of acoustic and electronic instruments that implements a network of transductions and feedback loops with the Organ Acusticum and Stefan Östersjö’s electric guitar. This combination of electroacoustic feedback and interaction algorithms has led to the development of the Sophtar, a new instrument designed by Visi that has become a staple of the quartet’s sound. Together, these elements generate a large-scale structure in three sections—slow-

fast-slow—each spanning two parts of Monteverdi's original music. The final section unfolds as a gradually expanding drone on the Acusticum organ—an emerging tonal cluster that slowly evolves in response to a choreography by Åsa Unander-Scharin. It begins as a discreet background for the fifth vocal movement, culminates in a climactic tone cluster, and then returns to its point of departure, while the guitar plays the prelude to the final vocal part.

The recording spans two sites: Studio Acusticum in Piteå, captured at the time of the premiere, and the Chapel of Reconciliation in Berlin, recorded in June 2024. For the Berlin session, the clarinetist worked with the same algorithm designed by Mattias Petersson, now extended with gesture control to modulate the data. These sessions were later edited and mixed to merge the instruments and acoustics of both spaces into a single, continuous sonic experience.

Stefan Östersjö

Lagrima d'amante al Sepolcro dell'Amata

I
Incenerite spoglie, avara tomba
fatta del mio bel Sol, terreno Cielo,
ahi lasso! I' vegno ad inchinarvi in terra.
Con voi chius'è 'l mio cor a marmi in seno,
e notte e giorno vive in pianto, in foco,
in duolo, in ira, il tormentato Glauco.

I
*Ashen remains, greedy tomb,
that has made an earthen abode for my fair sun,
alas! I come before you to bow to earth:
with you, my heart is entombed in this marble bosom,
and night and day Glauco lives
in fire, lamentation, pain, anger and torment.*

II

Ditelo, o fiumi, e voi ch'udiste Glauco
l'aria ferir di grida in su la tomba,
erme campagne; e'l san le Ninfe e 'l Cielo:
a me fu cibo il duol, bevanda il pianto,
letto, o sasso felice, il tuo bel seno,
poi ch'il mio ben copri gelida terra.

III

Darà la notte il sol lume alla terra
splenderà Cintia il dì, prima che Glauco
di baciâr, d'honorar lasci quel seno
che nido fu d'Amor, che dura tomba preme.
Ne sol d'alti sospir di pianto
prodighe a lui saran le fere e'l cielo.

IV

Ma te raccoglie o Ninfa, in grembo 'l cielo.
Io per te miro vedova la terra,
deserti i boschi e correr fiumi il pianto.
E Driade e Napee del mesto Glauco
ridicono i lamenti, e su la tomba
cantano i pregi de l'amato seno.

II

*Say it, ye rivers, and ye who have heard Glauco
rend the air with cries upon the tomb,
desolate countryside — the nymphs and heaven know it;
sorrow was my food, tears my drink,
my bed, o happy stone, your fair bosom,
since frigid earth has covered my beloved.*

III

*Night will bathe the earth in sunlight,
the moon will illuminate the day, ere Glauco
will leave off kissing and honoring that bosom
wherein Love had its seat, now hemmed in
by the harsh tomb; nor will the wild beasts and the
heavens be prodigal to him only in loud sighs and
lamentation.*

IV

*But you, o nymph, are gathered into the bosom of heaven.
I look for you; widowed is the earth,
the woods deserted, rivers of lamentation run;
and Dryads and Wood-nymphs recount the laments
of mournful Glauco, and upon the tomb
they sing the virtues of the beloved bosom.*

V

O chiome d'or, neve gentil del seno,
o gigli de la man, ch'invido il cielo
ne rapì, quando chiuse in cieca tomba.
Chi vi nasconde? Ohimè, povera terra!
Il fior d'ogni bellezza, il sol di Glauco
nasconde? Ah muse, qui sgorgate il pianto.

VI

Dunque amate reliquie un mar di pianto
non daran questi lumi al nobile seno
d'un freddo sasso? Ecco l'afflittito Glauco
fa risonar "Corinna" il mar e 'l cielo,
dicano i venti ogn'or, dica la terra:
"Ahi Corinna! Ahi morte! Ahi tomba!"

Cedano al pianto i detti. Amato seno
a te, dia pace il ciel, pace a te Glauco,
prega onorata tomba e sacra terra.

V

*O golden tresses, delicate snow-white bosom!
lily-white hands, that envious heaven
has snatched away! Sealed in this blind tomb
who has hidden you? Ah me, the wretched earth hides
the very flower of beauty, Glauco's sun?
Ah Muses, here give vent to your lamentation.*

VI

*Therefore, beloved remains, will not these orbs
yield a sea of tears to the noble bosom
of a cold stone? Behold the grieving Glauco
crying "Corinna" to the echoing sea and sky:
let the winds, let the earth ever repeat:
alas, Corinna! Alas, death! Alas, tomb!*

*Let words yield to lamentation: beloved bosom,
may Heaven give you peace; peace upon you, Glauco,
invoke the honored tomb and sacred earth.*

TRANSLATION *Martin Morell*

Erik Westberg Vocal Ensemble

SOPRANO

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Christina Fridolfsson
Anna Risberg
Anki Myhr

ALTO

Katharina Johansson
Katarina Karlsson
Cecilia Grönfelt
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in Studio Acusticum, Piteå, Sweden.

Studio Acusticum – World-class acoustics

As one of northern Europe's most advanced concert halls, Studio Acusticum in Piteå aims to provide the best conditions for live concerts and audio recording. Studio Acusticum also houses Luleå University of Technology's organ, the Acusticum Organ by Gerald Woehl, for concerts, tuition and research.



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