

SEEING IS HEARING, Alexandre Vanautgaerden, in *Ars Musica*, 1998, Bruxelles

This is not a book about music, but a photographic composition. The work of a man - Pierre Radisic- who heard no less than he saw how music is being made. What is published here is less a reportage that would bear witness to *Ars Musica*'s quality than Radisic's visual perception of the concerts performed during eight springs of contemporary creation.

For this is one of the book's first *plots*, its first motif: time. Years of music, as opposed to the brevity of the act of picture-taking. There is no stolen photograph in this collection, all the book's characters consciously entered Pierre Radisic's mobile studio. But they did it very quickly, between two rehearsals, between two chords. Luciano Berio's four portraits show this strange relationship - the Master enters: he is indifferent, diffident, immersed in his cigar-smoking, then all of a sudden he sees a human being behind the camera. He leaves, it is already over. What remains are four pictures. Sometimes, this book only speaks about this counterpoint, as in the luminous images of Thierry de Mey or Anthony Pay. More often, the book replays the music that whirled in the photographer's head. Thus the series «John Cage» or «Steve Reich», where both composers only appear as mere notes, scanning Pierre Radisic's concert.

Those familiar with his work know how he excels in the art of the portrait. He has no equal when it comes to bending the bodies within the frame, subduing them to the black stripe that encloses them. As a rule, each of his images is a monument. But here, perhaps for reasons of respect and unforced *révérence*, he refused to use the monumentality that comes naturally to him -let us think of the portraits of Iannis Xenakis or Robert Wangermée, so beautiful in their tragic immobility- in favour of an internal motion which gives every musician his voice. Pierre Radisic knows that a concert is a matter of unbalance, where every musician, even if pursuing a far-away goal that one could call the composer's thought, lives and feels the vibrations of the players surrounding him and which, note by note, will lead him to the silence that follows and shall make heard what is now spent. Herein lies the true subject matter of this book, not the image of music, its interpreters and its social System, but what, like a miracle, happens, in the air, among musicians.