

Bernhard Gál

relive

Audio CD

Gromoga Records, 2008



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Audio CD, Gromoga Records, Austria 2008

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www.gromoga.com

relive is Bernhard Gal's eighth solo production, after several CDs, a catalogue book and a DVD released on a variety of labels such as Durian, Plate Lunch, Intransitive, Klanggalerie and Gromoga. This is the first audio documentation of Gal's solo laptop performances.

In addition to his work as a composer and installation artist, Bernhard Gál also performs live, using a laptop computer along with additional electronic devices. Gál's solo concerts are comprised of elements from recent music and art projects as well as new field recordings, which he takes apart and reassembles in a quasi-improvised, live context. In many cases, the performances also reflect the respective concert venue, with its distinctive acoustic and sociocultural characteristics.

Between 2002 and 2008, Gál performed about 150 laptop concerts on four continents. This is his first live CD, featuring excerpts from concerts recorded between autumn 2007 and summer 2008. No sounds were added or edited afterwards, in order to maintain the live character of the original recordings.

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. meu nome é gal também | [florianópolis 04/08] | 06.00 |
| 2. konzerthauskeller | [vienna 02/08] | 09.19 |
| 3. velvet green | [washington, dc 12/07] | 10.33 |
| 4. schulterblatt | [hamburg 02/08] | 14.13 |
| 5. ordinary love | [guangzhou 11/07] | 15.33 |
| 6. pierce | [richmond 12/07] | 07.17 |
| 7. uhudler | [st. johann i. s. 07/08] | 08.29 |
| 8. hungover | [washington, dc 12/07] | 06.22 |
| | total time: | 77.50 |

Piano: Xenia Hu (1,4) | Guzheng: Yeh Juan-Reng (5, 8) | Voices: Mandy (4), Marianthi (3), Vivian (5)

Cover illustration by Nalan Yirtmaç | CD label photo by Peter Gossweiler | Art work by B. Gál

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Mp3 audio excerpts: http://www.bernhardgal.com/relive_cd.html

Austrian artist, composer and musicologist Bernhard Gál has become internationally known as one of the most prolific sound artists of his generation. During the past ten years, Gál has created over 50 sound installations and media art projects, combining sound, light, objects, spatial concepts and video projections into intense, and often site-specific, interdisciplinary art works. He also composes music for acoustic instruments and electro-acoustic music. As a (laptop) musician he has been performing over 150 concerts on four continents. He runs the record label Gromoga Records and is the director of the Austrian art organization 'sp ce'. Currently, Gál works as a composer, artist and curator in Vienna and Berlin, where he also taught sound art at the University of Arts in 2006-07. For his music and art projects, Gál has received numerous awards, and his music has been made available on 25 audio publications.

<http://www.bernhardgal.com>

Additional notes by Bernhard Gál

1. **meu nome é gal também** [florianópolis 04/08] 06.00

This piece is created from audio material sampled from two of my piano compositions, '88' and 'h-b-c-a', which are sent into a feedback loop, producing various, resonating sound layers. The concert in Florianópolis was shared with pianist Diogo de Haro and percussionist Peter Gossweiler; so, the use of piano sounds was inspired by Diogo's preceding solo performance. The title **meu nome é gal também** means 'My name is Gal as well' and refers ironically to Gal Costa's audio release 'meu nome é gal', a very popular album in Brasil.

2. **konzerthauskeller** [vienna 02/08] 09.19

konzerthauskeller starts with the sound of a shutting subway door in Vienna, which gets "frozen in time", resulting in a slowly evolving wall of sound, which dominates the first part of the piece. This sonic situation then merges with a treated bird call and field recordings from a casino in Las Vegas (from CD 'relisten', 2001). The title refers to a venue for experimental music situated in the basement of a prestigious concert hall in vienna.

3. **velvet green** [washington, dc 12/07] 10.33

The acoustic conditions of a concert venue have a strong impact on the development of my live performances. At Velvet Lounge in Washington (DC), I was confronted with a high noise level of conversation as the audience was awaiting the beginning of my set. I decided to start my performance unannounced, with a voice recording (taken from 'bestimmung darmstadt', a series of voice sculptures) slowly enveloping the space. It took some time until the audience realized that the concert had already begun and then the background chatting faded away. The piece moves on into more agitated territories, with sounds from the Viennese subway, finally leading into the (non-)silence of a forest and the return of Marianthi's voice.

4. **schulterblatt** [hamburg 02/08] 14.13

In sharp contrast with the previous track, this performance took place at a private residence in Hamburg, allowing for a highly focused concert experience. The intimate setting, combined with a high quality sound system, led to my developing a very quiet soundscape, based around the threshold of perception (the tea kettle sounds were taken from the sound installation 'zhu shui', 2000). Feedback resonances emerge and get combined with an audio excerpt from 'It's like...', a collaboration with artist Mandy Morrison (CD 'relisten', 2001) and, eventually, some piano sounds (from '88', 2003). **schulterblatt** (shoulder blade) is the street name of the venue, a quite strange moniker for a street indeed.

5. **ordinary love** [guangzhou 11/07] 15.33

Recorded in November 2007 at a night club in Guangzhou, this performance features many sounds that relate to Chinese culture in general and to the 'night club situation' in particular. I started with a quotation from a Cantonese voice recording (from the CD 'bestimmung new york', 1999) which leads into sounds of a billiard game (from the installation 'Dreiband', 2003), various casino sounds, a Taiwanese night market ('Tong-hua yie-shi', 1998), and guzheng (a traditional Chinese string instrument) samples (from the composition 'uh-jeh-gal', 2004). The title refers to Sade's song 'No ordinary love' which was played in heavy rotation at the foyer of the club, and the little alteration to the song's title more accurately describes the business orientation of the venue...

6. **pierce** [richmond 12/07] 07.17

Recorded during a small concert tour along the U.S. East Coast in December 2007, **pierce** opens with sounds from an antiquated ink-jet printer (from the sound installation 'enelten', 2002), as well as from high-pitched bird calls and crickets. All these sound recordings matched well with real-time sounds emerging from an adjacent tattoo store located in the back of the concert venue. The cricket's chirps eventually lead into a nocturnal soundscape from rural Austria - cowbells, rain and an approaching train. This soundscape escalates in a roaring, natural crescendo, which culminates in a wall of sound that then diminishes little by little in both volume and frequency range until the piece finally ends.

7. **uhudler** [st. johann i. s. 07/08] 08.29

Performed at an open-air concert in the lovely setting of an Austrian vineyard, **uhudler** takes as its outset the surrounding soundscape of rural Austria. The sudden introduction of a pitched-down ship horn points into a very different geographic and sonic direction. A continuous dark drone emerges which subsequently produces more commotion with the inclusion of the didgeridoo-like sound of an electric shower drain pump. The piece leads back into reality, as the Austrian field recording reappears. **uhudler** is the name of a local Austrian wine of dubious fame.

8. **hungover** [washington, dc 12/07] 06.22

A second excerpt from the concert at Velvet Lounge, DC, **hungover** not only completes this audio cd, but also features the ephemeral sound of singing wine glasses (taken from the composition 'z.....z', 2003). Tremolos from a Guzheng end this final piece.