

Knowing Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra's profound understanding of the relationships connecting sound, silence and space, I'm not surprised to see the fruits of a shared admiration for Tadao Andō as the recorded officialization of their teamwork. Indeed, many years ago Turra made recordings in the Vitra Seminar House of Weil am Rhein (Germany), designed according to the Japanese architect's principles; this led to his 2008 release *Texture.Vitra* (Koyuki). Upon Turra's request, Perletta took that material and reworked it for this project.

Being aware of the inherent proximity of absolute stillness and roaring noise, I always bear in mind how disparate types of environment can wholly mutate the refractions and ultimate consequences of a specific sound in relation to the perceiving subjects. By focusing solely on a "ceremonial" dimension, we would get a deceiving perspective on this record. This seems to occur quite frequently when Japan is directly or indirectly involved: in those instances, for someone, everything **MUST** resonate in impeccable fashion, precisely defined even in randomness, blindly following a predefined logic typically associated to cut-rate Zen references. No alternative interpretations whatsoever.

In truth, *Ma 間* does explore silence as a container of transient acoustic events. However, it's also an investigation of timbre and dynamics informed by an extreme variability. The reactions may depend on several factors, including the timbral personality of a given emission. The ears can be left on standby in utter muteness for interminable instants; comforted by the stretching of muffled reverberations; stunned by abrupt outbreaks; intrigued by anomalous equalizations of normality; disturbed by something coming across as a mere amplification of the quotidian. This includes processed fragments of voices, as well as unidentified objects whose resonance is somehow familiar. If anything, we find ourselves closer to musique concrete than witnessing an obsequious sonic celebration of enforced philosophies.

In essence, your attentiveness is needed, and not just for a single spin. A classic sleeper which grows on you with the passage of time, *Ma 間* wasn't born for categorization and – god forbid – has nothing to do with "ambient". Think instead of a cross-section of sensations derived from human or mechanical components, flowing into the listening area and identifying the attendants, ultimately adapting to the individual receptivities. The judgment of the merits, in this case, is practically useless. Having said that, the assembling talents of Perletta and Turra are indisputable, and that class is felt from the first minute to the last.

Massimo Ricci, Touching Extremes

The synogram 間 (Ma), a minimal unit of meaning used in Japanese writing, expresses a decisive concept for numerous artistic and philosophical practices, referring to the notion of the space and time between things, focusing on the void more than the substance, returning to the value of pauses, of intervals. In music, attention to such voids not only has contemporary or Western relevance, as some might believe. Much has been said about pauses, about silence, in other historical and cultural contexts. Here it is in the oriental tradition that is engaged. Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra, musicians both fascinated by the Zen approach and the work of the architect Tadao Ando, decided to re-adapt a seminal sound study by Perletta, whose sounds were collected right in the conference pavilion designed by Ando for the Vitra campus in Weil am Rhein. The research is developed through three compositions, unravelled according to the senses of the places explored, with the sounds of woods, rocks, pebbles and concrete, all materials preferred by Ando, who is particularly appreciated for his essential and evocative style. The sounds coexist with silences and are well-finished, intense and charismatic; the intent is to let oneself be engaged by architectural suggestions, alluding to the character of the spaces in an absolutely free and poetic way. If Ando's style is said to create a "haiku" effect, emphasising the void and the empty space to represent the beauty of simplicity, similarly Perletta and Turra begin from rather sparse and basic samples, but manage to emotionally involve the listener in a path of a thousand abstractions and titillations. Other inspirations seem to come from the combination of traditional elements and modernist aesthetics, from an almost artisanal attention to detail and a hyper-controlled definition, all hallmarks of Ando's poetics that seem to be engaged in this album. As the aesthete Fulvio Carmagnola once said, "the forms become in a certain sense illustrations, semi-opaque of an activity of thought that accompanies them. Adherent beauty, as the result of a project, even if it is a celibate project, detached from the register of practical ends".

Aurelio Cianciotta, Neural

If we could translate in just one word the fissures cut by Lucio Fontana in the canvas, the pregnant silences in the scores of the Wandelweiser collective, the wide line spacing that gives breath to a poem, that would be ma (間), a Japanese term that brings together the different meanings of a “negative space”, the absence that completes the form and function of an object, a place, an idea.

The homonymous project by Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra, like much of the production under the 901 Editions imprint, looks at Japanese arts and philosophy to re-establish a creative dialogue between the physical and the intangible, between aesthetic essentiality and the limpid horizon of thought.

Here comes into play another tutelary deity such as architect Tadao Ando, emblem of a subtractive logic that asserts the value of formal simplicity without any renunciation in terms of elegance (well before the minimalist style became yet another status symbol): “I like to see how far architecture can pursue function and then, after the pursuit has been made, to see how far architecture can be removed from function. The significance of architecture is found in the distance between it and function”.

These are a few necessary insights in order to experience consciously the discreet sound art of the Italian duo, that despite their reductionist approach always remain close to the tactile and auditory dimension of the real world.

An exploration that takes its cue from field recordings made by Turra inside some buildings designed by Ando, and already at the core of his solo project *Texture.Vitra* (Koyuki, 2008): placid streams of water, resonant pottery and rough metals, hissing gusts of wind among bare concrete aisles; an elemental phenomenology which, in the random alternation of acousmatic sources, brings us the echoes of an imaginary place abandoned but not devoid of identity, a sanctuary of which nature appears to tacitly regain control, and in which the physical gesture agrees to erase itself by means of a radical and devoted sound mimesis. Only in the third movement do slow and respectful footsteps make their way – a room tone that seemingly retained the shadows of centuries-old souls and rites, imprisoned in the unappearance of an eternal present.

An ideal complement to Vittorio Guindani’s recent *Jisei, ma* 間 further increases the meaning of a sound poetics that can rightly be defined as essential in an etymological sense: the infinitive form of the verb ‘to be’ as a hypothetical space for constant indeterminacy, a life form both unitary and plural, unaware and independent of human action and finitude.

(*) Tadao Ando, “The Emotionally Made Architectural Spaces of Tadao Ando”, *The Japan Architect*, no. 276, April 1980, pp. 45-46

Michele Palozzo, *Esoteris*

901 Editions released another two fine records on July 3. In these two releases, scintillating textures meet with microtonal sounds and musical philosophies become as real and as solid as physical, in-real-life architecture.

Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra's debut collaboration, *Ma*, is rooted in Japanese culture. Turra invited Perletta to rework his piece 'Texture Vitra' – a sound study composed of recordings from various architectural spaces, all of which were designed by Japanese architect, Tadao Ando – but this piece of music became a catalyst for something on a larger scale. The piece was an attempt to 'perform an active dialogue between Ando's aesthetic principles and sonic practice'.

In the same way, *Ma* explores the concepts of architecture and its influence on sound, and how sound can affect, shape, and adapt to its surroundings. This architectural entity doesn't exist in the physical world; it isn't a tower or a venue or a stadium or a concert hall or a dilapidated concrete block or a skyscraper or a bank or an office or a city hall. The space is only brought to life in the presence of music; the music gives birth to the space. Although music remains auditory, it affects the physical environment. Frequencies shatter glass. Vibrations alter the physical world. This is a place where sound sculpts a space.

Ma represents a concept to be found in multiple Japanese practices and disciplines, including music and architecture, wherein notions of space, time, dimension, distance, pause, interruption, and relationship are explored and investigated, and how these areas converse with and intertwine with music. Sudden gaps appear, as if dropping the listener through a floor, and other areas light up with an unfolding expanse of airy sound; a space empty apart from the sounds within (so not really empty at all, then). *Ma* is an indication and an exposing of the micro and the macro, the monumental and the restrained – a limitless chasm or the tiniest, in-between sound of silence as one note ends and the other is yet to make an appearance. The playfulness of music is still intact, and this is by no means a scientific record. *Ma* is experimental, but it has a solid, fundamental, and undeniable doctrine behind it: the concepts spread themselves out, and they're far-reaching.

So-called 'accidental sounds' are embraced and left in the recording. Interactions between the sounds and the surrounding space are also investigated – and the music creates a sense of place where one is absent and not physically existing – until the music begins to mould one. The music occupies the physical space and creates an entirely new space within the familiar one, folding itself over the old and the seen and overtaking it with an unseen – but audible – construction; something that can't be physically grasped but is rendered to be real and tangible, all the same. Presence and absence, the immaterial gaining a foothold and holding more of the listener than that which can be grabbed or touched, *Ma* uses the sounds of real objects and intertwines them with the invisible frequencies of music, both of which are real and present but occupy different spheres. It is capable of opening eyes and ears to the universality of sound and space, and their connected nature, which is both unifying and contrasting. They cannot be split apart, separated, or divided – both in conflict and resting in perfect, harmonic flow, as old as the Big Bang and – who knows? – perhaps even outdating it.

James Catchpole, Fluid Radio

A complex Japanese concept linked to space and time, explored across disciplines such as music and architecture, MA 間 is the title of the first collaborative album between Fabio Perletta (founder of the excellent label 901 Editions) and Luigi Turra.

The osmosis between the two composers is flawless, giving rise to a sensorial space of tactile fluidity, rich in silences and pauses, organic resonances and spatial voluptuousness.

The listener is literally drawn into the winding paths of the three compositions—blocks of magnetized electroacoustics traversed by wind-blown turbulence, granite-like ruptures, ghostly vocal fragments, and unsettling frictions.

Fragility flirts with a certain rocky intensity, smoothing out sharp edges to break free from a world too narrow, striving to open gaps that extend beyond the void.

A striking work of woody caresses and sudden abrasions, MA 間 fuses materialities, giving birth to an abyssal cosmos leaning toward parallel worlds and obsessive spirals. Essential.

Roland Torres, Silence And Sound

Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra's work is also closely tied to Japanese culture, establishing a direct correlation between the material components of sound and the architectural structures designed by Tadao Ando. As the artists themselves explain, "the kanji Ma represents a crucial concept in various Japanese practices... Its meaning is broad and shifts depending on context: Ma is the temporal element between two musical notes, the concept of emptiness, and the perception of space between interior and exterior in architecture."

A reworking of an earlier piece by Turra (Texture.Vitra, released in 2008), based on the treatment of field recordings made inside Ando's conference pavilion at the Vitra Campus in Weil am Rhein, Germany, the album unfolds in three sections. Each is marked by sounds refracted within the architectural space, only to be reborn as organic entities endowed with their own breath and distinctive physicality.

Massimiliano Busti, Blow Up Magazine #266–267

We stay within the Mote family with the first collaboration between Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra, conceived as a tribute to Tadao Ando. As is often the case with these two sound artists, the work begins from an absence of sound, gradually seeking a dialogue with the surrounding environment—in this case, the architecture designed by Ando and the elements within it that may enter into conversation with space itself. The resulting silence, the slow process grounded in auditory minimalism as a necessary approach, and the echoes expanding and being absorbed by the concrete surfaces, all lead inevitably toward a form of abstraction—one in which it becomes possible to perceive a space of absolute emptiness. Captivating.

Mirco Salvadori, Rockerilla #479–480

The essentiality of a simple, rigorous form that becomes a complex and deeply evocative space—an austere environment meticulously designed to act as a resonating chamber for the emotions of those who pass through it. Tadao Andō's architecture conveys a disarming imaginative power, a sense of serene sacredness where the introspective virtuosity of the Far East coexists in perfect balance with a typically Western inclination toward technology. It is from a shared admiration for the work of the Japanese master that the first collaboration between Fabio Perletta and Luigi Turra emerges.

This unprecedented partnership was initiated when Turra invited Perletta to rework an earlier sonic study based on environmental recordings captured inside the conference pavilion designed by Andō at the Vitra Campus in Weil am Rhein. From this material—and driven by their mutual fascination with East Asian culture and a shared inclination toward minimal sound that pierces silence—the two Italian artists distilled a vibrant sensory trajectory. It gives form to the exploration of an imaginary structure, shaped by the asymmetrical alternation of expansive pauses and vivid resonances, reflecting the masterful dialogue between fullness and emptiness, light and shadow.

Structured in three extended movements, the resulting composition unfolds as a silent flow of tactile droplets moving through space—measuring it, endowing it with tangible materiality. It is a slow, deliberate progression of fragments that are tectonically rough, fluidly luminous, and coldly radiant. Refracted through absence, they simultaneously find full definition of both themselves and the surrounding space, creating a perfect overlap between interior and exterior, between content and container.

What the duo sculpts is a sound that evokes a hypothetical visible, along with its elusive emotional resonance—pushing the practice of listening toward an increasingly deep and all-encompassing contemplative dimension.

Beppe Trotta, Ondarock

With *Ma* by Fabio and Luigi, the action unfolds across undefined rooms—a continuous passage from one space to another. Illogical and unpredictable. Doors lie horizontally, windows open from the floor, small objects float in the absence of gravity. And in each room, a presence—always turned away—and just as a few seem to begin turning their heads toward the unexpected visitor, before they can be glimpsed, you suddenly find yourself in another room. No identity revealed, no features or expressions discerned.

The necessary silences are the moments when you find yourself standing before a door, just before opening it. No steps yet taken, just the threshold of a whiteness that's always different, rising toward an infinite ceiling defined precisely by its dissolution into non-colour.

Room after room, presence after presence, indefiniteness upon indefiniteness—this vast container of potential encounters becomes an object you turn over in your hands. And every sound it makes is shaped by your own curious gestures, as if trying to grasp something that only a secret game could hold.

What might be inside? Surely something not meant to be understood at all costs—especially if understanding requires an effort made against your will. Let us return, instead, to that great freedom.

Tiberio Faedi, *A Silent Radio*

It's 11 PM on the English seafront at low tide—silent—and I find myself looking for my sunglasses. We're at the beginning of the third track of this incredible album/puzzle, and for the first time, two human voices appear—clear, together—almost attempting a dialogue. There are signs of life on planet MA. A faint glimmer of light. That's why, without even realizing it, I started searching for my sunglasses. At 11 PM, for heaven's sake.

The first collaborative project between Perletta and Turra took four years to complete and grows exponentially with every listen. Everything that might sound like “improv” at first gradually reveals itself as a meticulously crafted part of a perfect structure. There's a near-maniacal attention to every sound—but it's the kind of technical precision that lifts the listener, rather than weighing them down. It's a journey through white noise, grey noise, suspended stairways, terraces overlooking eternity, and survival tunnels.

Directly inspired by a kind of Japanese architecture that also embodies a way of life, Perletta and Turra blend their passion for and deep knowledge of Japan into a fascinating record—one that never gives you a fixed point of reference, and in fact, constantly shifts the coordinates of emptiness and fullness, of life traces and of structures built to hold everyday existence. The more you listen, the more you discover, and the more it scrambles your mental compass.

When I was asked, “What's your ambient album of the year so far?”—I said this one without hesitation. But to call this an ambient record is, in my opinion, far too limiting.

It should be listened to in total silence. Give yourself forty-five minutes every now and then—come on. Especially the final track, where walls, echoes, silences, and the words of humanoid ex-humans—survivors of various natural and social catastrophes—merge into a single stream, with a natural, inevitable flow. Given the times we're living in, it's no surprise that the right formula for harmony between architecture and constrained life should come from Japan—reinterpreted here through Italian eyes and ears.

Diego Favrin, *The New Noise*