

wave piano scenery player (2007)  
Lorenzo Pompa / Marc Sabat



(detail)

“wave piano scenery player” is an 18 hour sculpture / performance which was installed during the 2007 Donaueschinger Musiktage. The scenery consists of several artifacts brought into a single structure: large black paintings on paper sheets which divide a grand piano in two parts (sounding body, keyboard); three pieces of music combining the 88 keys of the piano with microtonally tuned sinewaves; a subwoofer and loudspeaker to reproduce the electronic tones; a pianist and computer, both acting as performers.

The time-based form is divided into three parts, presenting variations of the same sound material at three different levels of scale. The first part, “WAKE for JIM” (5 minutes) is performed by computer-controlled piano at the limit of its mechanical possibility. The second part, “to Damascus” (25 minutes) is performed by a live pianist, and combines the acoustic piano with electronic sinewaves. In the third part, “wave scenery” (17 hours 30 minutes), both pianist and computer control the piano, which in turn is triggering and gating microtonal electronic sounds.

The first two parts of the piece were presented on 19 October in a concert setting, with a seated audience. Pianist Stephen Clarke entered in the usual manner, and then disappeared behind the sculpture to perform. On the subsequent days, 20 and 21 October, the third part of the piece was presented as an installation, allowing the public to come and go freely, and to observe the structure and its individual elements from all sides.