



Radius 3 (What Next?, Nonsequitur, Box 344, Albuquerque, NM 87103) Comp of original radio broadcasts exploring radio's function of reporting, music programming & community development. Kathy Kennedy's captivating sound collage immerses one in sounds, feelings, ideas related to the human propensity to form "gangs" & stalk & exploit others. Cristof Mignone pieces together aurally irrelevant junk into a fascinating quilt documenting an unnoticed Wonderland on the other side of the eardrum. Chantal Dumas makes a sound movie about 3 sailors who cross a Bermuda Triangle like sound barrier to play a bizarre game of charades with the Wee Folk. Dan Lander presents field recordings from inside a single room in the least successful piece.

Radius 4 (What Next?) More original compositions presented first as radio broadcasts. Imagine tuning your dial & hearing a collage of the little sounds of daily life with dreamy instrumental underlays. Or an essay & demonstration of the alternating richness & isolation of the aural world of the blind. Or voices speaking French—an old woman, a seductive younger woman—men speaking Vietnamese, characters talking, bringing their world of memories to you. The last piece is prob the most interesting, as it creates a musical world in and around the spoken word.

Dec 96/Jan 97

TheSun

Radio Art is an unappreciated art form in America. But thanks to Nonsequitor, a new music label based in Albuquerque, and its recently released *Radius-Volumes 3 & 4* CD's, listeners can tune into experimental works made for radio broadcast to a wider audience. Curated by Dan Lander and featuring works by Canadian radio artists in English and French, these collections are stark and stunning examples of why radio is such a powerful sound medium.

VARIOUS ARTISTS *Radius #3* CD; *Radius #4* CD

The radio art I've heard broadcast recently is pretty much limited to either Subgenius-style rant or Ira Glass' excellent *This American Life*, which, despite its charms, still consists mainly of readings or spoken word performances. The *Radius* series is an attempt to distribute work that more extensively utilizes the sound potential of radio broadcasting. For anybody born and raised in the cathode glow, the notion of sitting and listening to a radio performance must sound as quaint as that of a horse and buggy ride. To their credit, the sound artists compiled here are not concerned with radio drama. For example, the narrative of Kathy Kennedy's "Taking Steps" on *Radius #3* is fractured and rearranged via the sounds of footsteps, percussion and layered voices a la Ken Nordine. Much of the work on these two CDs will appeal to music fans sympathetic to folks like Christoph Heeman or The Hafler Trio, textures and sounds are altered and spliced (for example) by Christoph Migone into a very musical collage. Dan Landers works with the sound of voices, answering machines, printers and other objects to create "Room," a work that might pale in comparison with its predecessors. This third volume of the series is made up of Canadian artists, a harsh token when I consider that at Chicago Public Radio, Wynton Marsalis is considered a sound explorer. Volume 4 begins with Hildegard Westerkamp's "Doors Of Perception," which seems to tinker with the notion of opening gateways to various sound worlds. As with so much of this series, the sounds invite speculation and imagination. Darren Copeland narrates a sonic depiction of blindness, that is to say a portrayal of how the blind navigate via sound and time. The incredibly subtle and beautiful Algojo (Algojo piece that follows, interweaves French text with arcs of music that remind me of some of Paul Schutze's more melodic work. And Robert Normandeau finishes *Radius #4* with another juxtaposition of voice and sounds, "La Chambre Blanche." Both of these volumes offer some deep listening if you're willing to accept the opportunity. [What Next?/Nonsequiter, PO Box 344, Albuquerque, NM 87103] *Bruce Adams*

THE WIRE

ADVENTURES IN MODERN MUSIC

Issue 162 August 1997

£2.50 \$5.50 ISSN 0952-0686 (USPS 006231)

Various Artists

Radius Volume 3

WHAT NEXT? WN 0018 CD

Various Artists

Radius Volume 4

WHAT NEXT? WN 0019 CD

Dan Lander

Zoo

EMPREINTES DIGITALES IMED 9526 CD

Radio was important in forming a national identity amongst Canadians otherwise separated by vast distances. It bred a strong, almost countercultural, radio art tradition, dating back to 1967 and pianist Glenn Gould's pioneering *Isolation* trilogy. These three CDs continue that healthy Canadian tradition.

Many of the artists included here (Dan Lander, Christoph Migone and Hildegard Westerkamp) favour a 'writing through sound' approach over traditional storytelling or Hörspiel. Sound events are edited and arranged on tape as a reappraisal of our audio landscape and as an examination of the referential as opposed to abstract in sound. Little attempt is made to 'musicalise' sound fragments in the inauthentic, decorative sense often favoured by electroacoustic composers.

The two *Radius* CDs (compiled by Dan Lander) are not the creative shot in the arm of his earlier collections (*Radiophonies* and *Radio Rethink*). Of the eight pieces across this new pair, you need to be fluent in French to appreciate three of them. And I'm not.

Meanwhile, his own *Zoo* disc contains four made-for-radio works. *Talking To A Loudspeaker* is a formative stab at a critique of radio which starts like a more humourless *Negativland*. It opens out as it goes along, but the real coup is provided at the end by radio artist Gregory Whitehead with an incantation — intoned long distance down the phone, each line repeated by the congregation assembled at the end — about the potential transmission has for celebrating diversity and fostering community: "I dream of a time when everybody lives, breathes and touches each other on air..."

In *Destroy: Information Only*, Lander revisits people who visited him in hospital 15 years earlier. It's a piece about memory where diversity is celebrated at all levels: location, modes of discourse, interaction, experience. There's no attempt to keep people on track. Rather, it's through these digressions (video games, camp fires, flatulence) that the subjects reveal themselves. An open-ended and endearingly naturalistic model for radio, where radio moves towards the participants rather than the reverse.

PHIL ENGLAND