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**TECHNICAL INFORMATION**

Some of the equipment used in making this recording:
- Studer A80 8-Channel Master Recorder
- Studer B62 1/4" Stereo Tape Machines
- EMS Synthi 100 'Delaware'
- ARP Odyssey
- EMS VCS3
- Countryman Phaser
- Glen Sound Mixing Console
- AKG 451 Condenser Microphones
- EMT Stereo Echo Plate
The BBC Radiophonic Workshop provides a creative service, ranging from complete background scores of electronic music for radio and television productions, through sound for poetry and science fiction to signature tunes; periodically, complete experimental stereo programmes are originated and produced.

Apart from the electronic music for Doctor Who, the Radiophonic Workshop makes major contributions to television drama, documentaries and children’s programmes, to drama and schools programmes on radio, and to many local radio stations. In all, more than two hundred different commitments a year are undertaken. The composition and realisation of the music and sound is done by a small number of specialised creative staff.

Desmond Briscoe, the Workshop’s Organiser, writes: “On visiting the Radiophonic Workshop, many people are surprised to find that there are, in fact, four ‘Workshops’ where electronic music of various kinds is produced. The ‘Workshops’ are equipped with a good deal of conventional professional audio equipment, together with many devices which have been modified or specially constructed for use in the realisation of electronic music.

The heart of the operation, however, is always the person who composes the music, and eventually translates his or her ideas onto a piece of recording tape (realisation).

Most people working in this field prefer to work alone, or with a minimum of technical assistance, but we have included two pieces on this record where collaborations have taken place: La Grande Pièce de la Foire de la Rue Delaware composed by Malcolm Clarke and realised with assistance from Richard Yeoman-Clark and Nénuphar composed and realised by Malcolm Clarke and Glynis Jones.

In making the record, we have set out to entertain rather than inform, but we hope it gives some idea of the range of music produced by the Radiophonic Workshop.”
DICK MILLS is the Workshop’s ‘oldest inhabitant’ since 1958. His earliest claim to fame was Major Bloodnok’s Stomach, however he is now better known for the electronic sounds in Doctor Who. As a total contrast to his work, he is an enthusiastic aquarist – the quietest of hobbies.

GLYNIS JONES came to the Workshop in 1972, a musician by instinct and training. ‘But now I find artistic vagrancy a more exciting way of life. So many unnecessary fences have been erected around expressive media. I’ve scrambled painfully through a few of them, and have been amused at how far I can see from the other side.’

JOHN BAKER joined the Radiophonic Workshop in 1963, and has evolved a unique style of electronic music composition, using familiar basic sounds combined with sophisticated tape-recording techniques. He studied composition at The Royal Academy of Music and is an accomplished jazz musician and arranger.

PADDY KINGSLAND joined the Radiophonic Workshop in 1970, and has composed signature tunes for many Radio and Television shows, as well as radiophonic music for drama, poetry and documentary programmes. He prefers to use a mixture of electronic and conventional instrumental sounds in his work rather than pure electronics. This is demonstrated on his BBC Records LP Fourth Dimension.

RICHARD YEOMAN-CLARK started his musical career as a chorister in St Albans Abbey. He came to the Workshop in 1970, having been involved in the early BBC stereo experiments, and several live electronic music broadcasts. His considerable knowledge of electronics has proved invaluable, not only in realising his own compositions, but also in advising other members of the Workshop.

MALCOLM CLARKE finds, in the creation of radiophonic sound, the satisfaction of working as an individual in a complete art form. He is now working towards combining electronic sound and visual images to form a self-contained medium in which the artist has total control over the work at every stage.

ROGER LIMB originally from Cheltenham, joined the BBC as a studio manager, and came to the Workshop after working as a television announcer. He has a formal musical background but finds his years playing in jazz and pop groups equally as valuable in his radiophonic work.
The Radiophonic Workshop was the third album to be released from the BBC's far-flung maverick outpost in Maida Vale, after BBC Radiophonic Music (REC 25M, 1968/1971) and Fourth Dimension (RED93S, 1973). BBC Radiophonic Music had been a showcase for many of the shorter Television and Radio themes and jingles the Workshop produced in its first ten years, alongside a few longer pieces such as War of the Worlds, Structures and Delia Derbyshire's evocative Blue Veils and Golden Sands, while Fourth Dimension was truly Paddy Kingsland's solo album.

With the first two records featuring mainly commissioned work, it was decided to try something a bit different for the third. Depending on who you talk to, it was either ‘experimental’ (Malcolm Clarke) or ‘self-indulgent’ (Dick Mills), but it is true that with the exceptions of Major Bloodnok’s Stomach (created by Dick for The Goon Show in 1959 and presented here in a new stereo version) and Paddy Kingsland’s The Panel Beaters (written for BBC Radio Sheffield) and The World of Science (BBC Overseas Service), all of the tracks here were composed for the record. It was also decided to make the recording an experiment in stereo audio production (as most of the Workshop’s output for monophonic broadcast). The album was released in February 1975, having been in preparation since May the previous year.

Malcolm Clarke, perhaps the greatest musical anarchist the Workshop ever employed, kicks off with his Grande Pièce. Roughly translated, it means ‘The Grand Performance at the Fairground in Delaware Road’ (where the Workshop was contained in a building that was once home to a skating rink). Later, Malcolm was delighted to learn that the French word ‘foire’ can, in some circumstances (as in ‘avoir la foire’), mean ‘diarrhoea’. Like other work here, it was an excuse to combine electronic sounds produced by the massive EMS Synthi 100 ‘Delaware’ synthesiser with live recordings. The opening arpeggios were sequenced, the control voltages also being used to drive two voltage controlled amplifiers (one inverted) to effect the panning of the sound across the stereo image.

Malcolm’s next contribution was inspired by a visit to his neighbours’ new bathroom. Amused by the noises produced therein, he returned with a portable tape machine and the idea for Bath Time. Various rhythmic loops were constructed from the sounds made by this extraordinary plumbing and combined with electronic textures produced on the VCS3. This track also features a guest appearance by Malcolm’s (then) baby daughter, Esther, and some seagulls. Malcolm’s last solo contribution to this recording is the remarkable Romanesca Rout, in which a sedate Renaissance dance is disrupted by the arrival of the cavalry. Revolutionary indeed.

The late John Baker is represented here by Brio. It’s typical of Baker’s output: jazzy theme over tape-cut rhythm (John was the only man who could truly make musique concrete swing). Two additional John Baker tracks (Accentric and Chino) were on the master tape for this album, but omitted from the vinyl cut due to lack of space. We have included them on the digital version of this reissue.

Dick Mills’s moody ambient Adagio was produced for this album but later found fame as one of the backgrounds in the children’s TV series Captain Zep: Space Detective. Crazy Dazy was an experiment in stereo sound montage: a little old lady on a pushbike meets boy racer in a sports car down a quiet country lane - guess who wins…?

Roger Limb’s two tracks were again original. Geraldine was a tune he had been toying with for some time, and was written originally for guitar. Here was an opportunity to orchestrate it properly and for this one track a drummer was called for: session musician Gerald Down recorded his contribution on the opening of 29th September 1974. Kitten’s Lullaby started life as a simple sound generated on the VCS3, and grew from there.

Nénuphar (‘Water Lilly’) was a collaboration between Glynis Jones and Malcolm Clarke, another experiment in programming the Synthi 100 to create long evolving textures. Glynis Jones’ solo tracks, Veils and Mirrors and Schlum Rooli, are similarly ambient, each using voices to great effect.

Finally, Waltz Antipathy is, as its title suggests, a waltz-time blowout on the Synthi 100. Richard Yeoman-Clark would go on to create the original backgrounds for the TV series Blake’s Seven.

Most of the tracks on this album have been taken from the original master recordings, generally at least a generation back from those used to create the original LP master. There are exceptions: Brio is taken from the original cutting master as it properly and for this one track a drummer was called for: session musician Gerald Down recorded his contribution on the evening of 29th September 1974. Kitten’s Lullaby started life as a simple sound generated on the VCS3, and grew from there.

It is important to remember that the BBC Radiophonic Workshop (which finally closed its doors in 1997) was always a service department within a large national broadcasting corporation. Most of its work was commissioned to accompany specific moods and timings dictated by producers and directors. The Radiophonic Workshop is an extraordinarily varied compilation that shows the composers stretching their creative legs beyond the usual confines, and one that has perhaps also been quietly influential down the years.

Mark Ayres

John Baker and Paddy Kingsland using the Synthi 100 ‘Delaware’
Other BBC Radiophonic Workshop Titles Available on iTunes

[Image of The Changes]

[Image of The Living Planet]

[Image of The Box of Delights]

[Image of The Soundhouse]

[Image of BBC Radiophonic Workshop - 21]