

# THE ROCKENHAUSEN ALMANACH

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## DANIELE GHISI

Composition for Carillon  
commissioned by  
Rockenhausen Festival for New Music

### **World Premiere**

Part I

Nov 6 - 8, 2020

Part II

Jan 3 - Dec 19, 2021

Part III

Nov 12 - 14, 2021

FESTIVAL  
NEUE  
MUSIK



## **DANIELE GHISI**

Daniele Ghisi was born 1984 in Trescore Balneario, near Bergamo, Italy. He studied mathematics at the University of Milan-Bicocca and composition at the G. Donizetti Conservatory in Bergamo, graduating with 1st class honors in both subjects and was awarded the J. S. Mayr prize.

He has participated in numerous seminars on composition, i.e. with George Benjamin and the Ensemble Modern (Frankfurt, 2005) at the IEMA, and at Voix Nouvelles with Brian Ferneyhough, Michael Jarrell and François Paris (Royaumont, 2006). He has won recognition in various national and international music competitions and has received numerous commissions from various bodies, including the French Ministry of Culture. In 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 he participated in IRCAM's Cursus I and II, a training program for young composers in Computer Music and Composition.

Concurrently he was the Composer in Residence for the Transforme Session in Royaumont. In 2009-2010 he served as Composer in Residence at the Akademie der Künste (Berlin) and in 2011-2012 as a member of the Académie de France en Espagne – Casa de Velázquez in Madrid. In 2012-2013 he worked as a research composer at IRCAM (Paris) and in 2013-2014 as a research assistant at the Haute École de Musique in Geneva.

Daniele's music has been performed by numerous ensembles and orchestras. He is a co-founder of the blog [www.nuthing.eu](http://www.nuthing.eu) and together with Andrea Agostini he is the creator of the project *bach: automated composer's helper*, a real-time library of computer-aided composition, for which he won the AFIM-Jeune Chercheur and A. Piccialli prizes (2012). His opera *La notte poco prima della foresta* was premiered in 2009; his cycle of lieder *abroad* has been published by Casa Ricordi in 2011.

In 2020, Daniele Ghisi was made a visiting composer at the Center for New Music and Audio Technologies at the University of California, Berkeley. For the 2018 Rockenhausen Festival for New Music, he was commissioned to write *This Is The Game*, a 30-minute work for voice and electronics, which was premiered on November 3rd, 2018 (with Salome Kammer as soloist) and subsequently performed at the co-commissioning Milano Musica Festival. The work deals with the contrast between individual and public, reflecting on the idea of personal identity.



*I dedicate the Rockenhausen Almanach to the town of Rockenhausen and its carillon on the facade of the Museum for Time. The Almanach is meant to accompany life in the community. Like pages of a diary, these miniatures were written between March of 2019 and March 2020. But the music of the carillon does not touch us like the words of a book or sounds of a concert; it reaches us like the wind and the rain. It reaches us whether we search it out or not. Therein lies both their tenderness and a responsibility. It is my heartfelt wish that the Rockenhausen Almanach, a sort of space-time installation, may one day become a bit like wind and rain... touching us ever so softly, tenderly.*

Daniele Ghisi

## **THE ROCKENHAUSEN ALMANACH**

At the 2018 Festival of New Music, Daniele enchanted the audience with a tiny Idea for Carillon, which inspired him to compose the Rockenhausen Almanach. That work is a set of 51 miniatures, one for each week of the year except the 52nd, for the ninth week, which is treated to a substantial, 38-minute long composition.

Daniele Ghisi was working on the piece from March 2019 until March 2020. For the composition of each miniature, Daniele set a fix time of one week and decided then, that each work should be performed in the week in which it was composed. Therefore, the Rockenhausen Almanach is not a conventional composition but, much rather like pages of a musical diary, following a schedule and giving each week of the year in Rockenhausen a distinct color; a gift for the city and its visitors. Every day, at 4.20PM, Daniele Ghisi's work emits from the carillon; a musical treasure on loop.

The Rockenhausen Almanach connects one Festival with another and makes contemporary music a tangible, every-day experience for everyone. The work divulges personal aspects from the composer's life and ended up symbolizing a historically momentous situation: The time of composition reaches into the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused havoc in Bergamo, Ghisi's home, in the

March of 2020, while he was working in California. Thus deeply affected, the piece for week # 9 is not like the others – just as Corona rudely changed our lives and all our plans. Daniele Ghisi makes the bells ring in a wordless commemoration of the places that have existential importance to him: He mourns the dead of the pandemic in Bergamo, New York, Berkeley, Rockenhausen, Paris.

*Daniele Ghisi: #9 is not a miniature, but a memento, compressing several months into about half an hour, with one stroke for each dead in the regions I hold dear. A bell crudely reverts to doing what it used to do best: mortuos plango, vivos voco.*

# **THE CARILLON**

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## **BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE**

Several parts of the sound miniatures – including piece #9 *fulgura frango* – are impossible for humans to play and were planned for the mechanical performance system of the carillon. This indicates Ghisi's interest in mechanical instruments such as Disklavier, whose inventor, Conlon Nancarrow, has composed exclusively for mechanical, self-playing pianos. This is not about replacing man with machine but rather about the exploration of new compositional possibilities, beyond human facility.

The Royal Eijsbouts bell foundry from Asten (Netherlands) is in charge of the computer-controlled playing.



# WORLD PREMIERE PART I

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## Rockenhausen Festival for New Music 2020

Museum für Zeit, Rognacplatz

### 14 Sound Miniatures, including #9

Friday, Nov 6, 2020

- #06 a flower in your hair
- #04 Glocken Phasen
- #23 natura morta con limoni
- #11 Viktor e i bulloni della torre

Saturday, Nov 7, 2020

- #36 an der Donau
- #16 viderunt
- #47 Huddersfield with shoes
- #31 Venere non è una stella
- #30 in the sky with diamonds

Sunday, Nov 8, 2020

- #49 febbre
- #24 Emmanuel
- #09 fulgura frango** (38 min)
- #33 Conlon
- #25 Dimitri
- #50 a field guide to falling snow

# URAUFFÜHRUNG TEIL II

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## Over the course of 2021

Museum für Zeit, Rognacplatz

## 12 Sound Miniatures

Daily, at 4:20 pm, throughout the week, starting on Sunday, ending on Saturday\*. The number of the miniature corresponds with the number of the calendar week.

- #1 a new start
- #3 Berkeley, CA
- #7 air
- #13 thou art so like a flower – thou art so like a vortex
- #15 express., soutenu, cresc. poco
- #18 the shape of stories
- #20 quattro finali e mezzo
- #28 Elba a distanza
- #38 cheap plastic ultragain
- #40 arabesque
- #42 Summer Diamantis, au beau milieu d'une étendue  
plane et vide
- #51 grève, Greta, gré

\* based on the traditional order of the week, where Sunday was a holiday and as the first day of the 7-day week – a division that was valid worldwide until just a few decades ago.

# WORLD PREMIERE PART III

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## Rockenhausen Festival for New Music 2021

Museum für Zeit, Rognacplatz

### 25 Sound Miniatures

Friday, Nov 12, 2021

#32 Fratte Rosa

#02 come la prima volta

#14 a pösâ e òsse

#52 Vom Himmel hoch

#17 un tappo in meno

#26 tante luci

#41 Machault after Boulez

#39 Schafe können sicher weiden

Saturday, Nov 13, 2021

#37 hell goes round and round

#10 daß du ewig denkst an mich

#08 a spot of bother

#12 eukalyptus

#46 cadono

#29 Cornalita

#35 the day all amplifiers went bad (K449)

#27 glifi

#45 tutunno

Sunday, Nov 14, 2021

#22 shine

#05 there are bells in  
Berkeley's tower

#19 come ciliegie dopo  
la grandine

#21 Jean-Claude

#34 uno

#48 God only knows

#43 the milky way  
(non-electrified version)

#44 Zeit für

## THE MINIATURES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

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Museum für Zeit, Rognacplatz | The number of the miniature corresponds with the number of the calendar week.

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|-----|--|-----|--|
| #1  | a new start  | #28 | Elba a distanza  |
| #2  | come la prima volta                                      | #29 | Cornalita  |
| #3  | Berkeley, CA   | #30 | in the sky with diamonds                                     |
| #4  | Glocken Phasen   | #31 | Venere non è una stella                                      |
| #5  | there are bells in Berkeley's tower                      | #32 | Fratte Rosa  |
| #6  | a flower in your hair                                    | #33 | Conlon   |
| #7  | air  | #34 | uno  |
| #8  | a spot of bother   | #35 | the day all amplifiers went bad (K449)                       |
| #9  | fulgura frango<br>(38 min   erklingt einmalig)           | #36 | an der Donau   |
| #10 | daß du ewig denkst an mich                               | #37 | hell goes round and round                                    |
| #11 | Viktor e i bulloni della torre                           | #38 | cheap plastic ultragain                                      |
| #12 | eukalyptus   | #39 | Schafe können sicher weiden                                  |
| #13 | thou art so like a flower –<br>thou art so like a vortex | #40 | arabesque  |
| #14 | a pösâ e òsse  | #41 | Machault after Boulez  |
| #15 | express., soutenu, cresc. poco                           | #42 | summer Diamantis, au beau milieu d'une étendue plane et vide |
| #16 | viderunt   | #43 | the milky way<br>(non-electrified version)                   |
| #17 | un tappo in meno   | #44 | Zeit für   |
| #18 | the shape of stories                                     | #45 | tutunno  |
| #19 | come ciliegie dopo la grandine                           | #46 | cadono   |
| #20 | quattro finali e mezzo                                   | #47 | Huddersfield with shoes                                      |
| #21 | Jean-Claude  | #48 | God only knows   |
| #22 | shine  | #49 | febbre   |
| #23 | natura morta con limoni                                  | #50 | a field guide to falling snow                                |
| #24 | Emmanuel   | #51 | grève, Greta, gré  |
| #25 | Dimitri  | #52 | Vom Himmel hoch  |
| #26 | tante luci   |     |  |
| #27 | glifi  |     |  |



## THE ROCKENHAUSEN CARILLON

The Rockenhausen Carillon was installed in 2014. Operated by an automated console, its 37 bells ring out six times throughout the day, playing a seasonal selection of folk tunes. During the summer months, the city hosts a concert series with international carillonners.

The carillon knows no boundaries and enables cultural and social participation. The Rockenhausen Almanach brings with it a touch of the contemporary; it touches people's lives and – the composer hopes – »reaches us like wind and rain«.

Dr. Lydia Thorn Wickert | thornconcept.

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