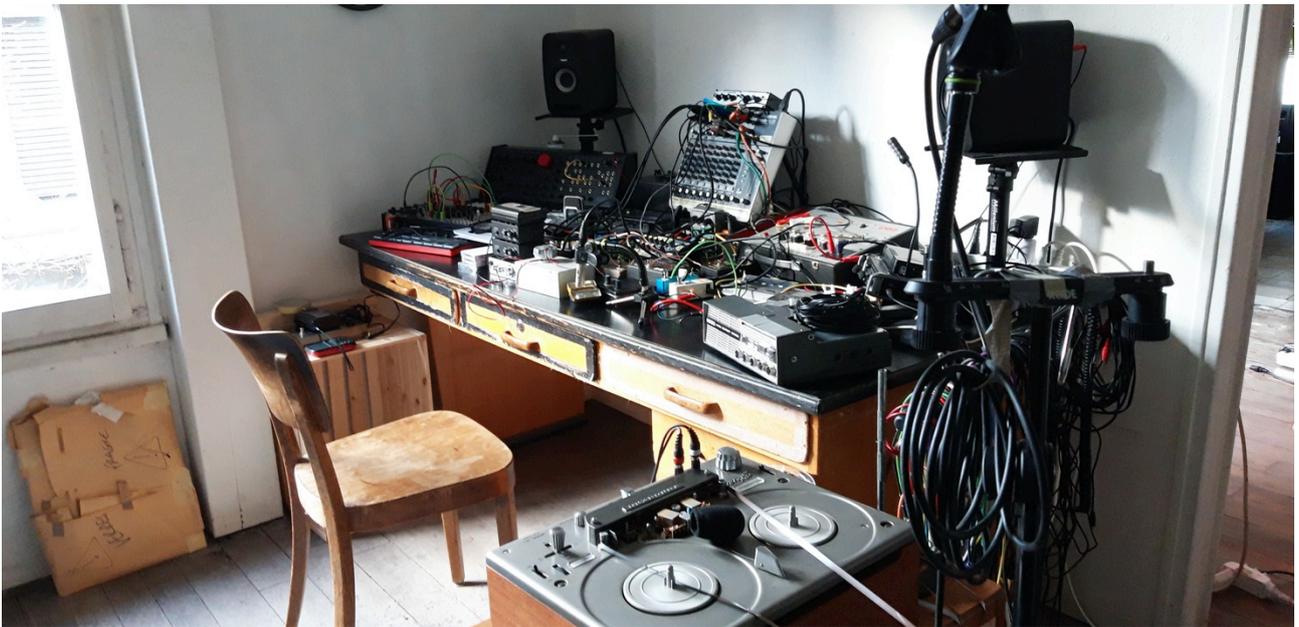


FL: How do you conceptualize your recordings? Do you improvise to find ideas that you then develop and exploit, or do you start with specific ideas that you already have in your head?

FM: A bit of both, actually, since I work in two different places, my studio and my home studio: in the studio, I improvise, I try things out, it's a process where I create my own sounds from elements I find here and there. I accumulate materials without any specific goal, just for the sake of creating and exploring. Sometimes, it's through this process that new ideas are born, giving free rein to the unexpected. At home, in my home studio, the process becomes more thoughtful. That's where I listen back to and break down all the raw material, so I can rework and organize it. This allows me to build up a sound bank that I can reuse later. When I'm working on a commission, album, or any other project, there's a long period of reflection beforehand, before I produce a single sound, which allows me to lay the groundwork before I get started. Then, the sound editing phase takes a long time; it's often the longest and most meticulous part of the process.



FL: It seems that, in your musical work, you are generally interested in banality and the tensions that can arise from it. One could also say that you are interested in the interstices, the spaces between events. How did you come to focus your gaze and your ear on these spaces, and what interests you about them?

FM: On the one hand, I work with a lot of poor-quality equipment, often in bad condition, and with found sounds. With the modular synthesizer, I look for sounds at the limit of audibility, flirting with almost inaudible frequencies where the slowness and duration of frequency modulations play a fundamental role. These frequency shifts are essential, and I like subtle, almost inaudible changes that create fragile and intriguing textures where every tiny variation counts, even if it may go unnoticed.

On the other hand, I have good microphones and high-quality recorders, and I like to use this equipment to record as accurately as possible material that may initially seem poor in terms of sound quality. I play around a lot with spatialization, with exaggerating the panning. I also sometimes make certain sounds that may seem poor or boring last a long time, in an attempt to get the listener to pay attention to what might seem trivial or insignificant. I try to transform what seems trivial into something captivating. Conversely, when a sound situation becomes too obvious, too "pleasant" (obviously, this remains a very personal perception), when the balance settles too easily, I like to break it all up quite brutally, like an axe blow that disrupts the listening experience and offers a rupture, a shock. I have always been interested in this kind of amplification of reality that occurs during a

recording, at that moment when each microphone becomes an artifact capturing not only sounds, but also the intentions surrounding the recording process. This creates an intimate relationship between the sound object, its environment, and human intervention, between what is heard and what is suggested to be heard.

What I particularly like is the tension that arises between these two extremes: on the one hand, the potential for failure, even the destruction of a moment, a sound, a listening experience; on the other, the emergence of suspended moments. I find it a way of flirting with poetry. Sometimes during concerts, it's the volume that creates this tension and pushes (I hope) the listener to adjust their listening, to make an effort to adapt, to better grasp the stakes of the concert. There is something fascinating in what can be gained from this, in this ability to manipulate listening, to guide attention in an almost invisible way. During the soundcheck, I adapt to the acoustics of the venue and test different sound materials. I listen carefully to the frequency responses, I listen to the concert space and observe how it reacts to my sounds. This moment is crucial for me, because it allows me to determine which sound textures will best fit the venue. This will help me prepare a sketch that will serve as a guide for structuring the concert's improvisation, while keeping an open mind to the unexpected.

FL: What about the form? Does everything come together during the process, or do you have a compositional idea from the outset?

FM: It depends on the type of work. For commissioned pieces, intended for ensembles or for an installation, for example, I start with a very specific idea, either in terms of the concept or the type of sounds or sound materials I'm going to work with. In these cases, I structure the work: I create a graphic score, where I detail the durations and frequencies, ensuring that each sound element is perfectly defined, for example, with notes of intent. For other projects, even if the approach is more free, I always have a starting point. It can be as simple as a sentence I've read or written, an image or a film, a feeling I had during a conversation. These are the kinds of elements/events that will define the composition. It's very personal and hard to explain. I often start with sound clips that I have created, worked on, and recorded in my workshop or home studio. I let them guide me and add sounds, make cuts, modify, and adjust without too many constraints until I am satisfied with the result. It's a fairly organic process, where the sound leads and guides me, rather than the other way around.

FL: You produce a mix of electronic sounds with your machines and concrete sounds (field recordings, pre-recorded sounds, or instruments). There is a play between the boundaries of the concrete and the digital, creating a rather unique musical score and universe. Why is this play between the two important to you?

FM: More than important, I would say that it's simply that I like this type of sound. I don't rank different types of sounds or the means I use to produce them. Whether they are electronic or concrete, it doesn't matter; what matters above all is their ability to surprise me. The balance between these sounds is created organically, effortlessly. Sometimes I find myself in a situation where I don't even know exactly whether a particular sound comes from concrete material or is purely electronic in origin. I like it when the boundaries become blurred, regardless of where they come from.

FL: I had the opportunity to hear you live. One thing that particularly struck me was the play on physical sensations. The last time I heard you, your set was quite loud and you used low frequencies to produce a pulsating effect. You could really feel those pulsations and vibrations. Is physicality something you consciously play with? It's difficult to reproduce that on a record. How do you deal with that difference?

FM: Yes, I do like to play quite intensely, but it's important to understand that this doesn't necessarily mean playing extremely loudly all the time. I have this reputation for playing too loud, but often people confuse volume with intensity. Well, to be honest, it's true that to achieve certain effects I'm looking for, I sometimes have to turn up the volume, sometimes reaching 100 dB, maybe even a little more. But on the other hand, I also play with very soft sounds. What really interests me is the difference in dynamics between these two extremes: this oscillation between too much and too little. I approach each concert

differently, adapting to the venue and its acoustics. The sound is always adjusted according to how the room "sounds" and where I am playing, usually in the middle of the audience, but also according to the layout of the speakers and their power. It's a dialogue with the environment; I adapt so that the sound blends in as well as possible with the venue. It's not just a question of pure volume, it's also a question of sound quality: it's the frequencies, their harmonies, and how the waveforms move in that space that have more impact than just the volume in creating that feeling of "playing loud." For example, a sine wave at 4000 Hz at 80 dB can be much more extreme for the ear than an organic texture at 98 dB. It is much more subtle than what the decibel measurement might indicate.

Reproducing this intensity on a disc is certainly a challenge, but there are ways to create a similar intensity using other techniques: working on durations, register changes, variations in sound dynamics, and meticulous work on panning are all essential tools for achieving this. I always think about a record in terms of the medium on which it will be presented. If it's for a CD, I know I can explore the dynamics of panning and frequency response much more freely than on vinyl or cassette, but the latter offer opportunities to work with a medium that responds better to saturation, for example. If the music is intended for online release, I might take advantage of the technical possibilities offered by this format, such as 48 or 96 kHz sound quality, or the ability to work on very long durations, which would be impossible on a physical medium. Basically, it's similar to my live work: the place where I play has a profound influence on the music. For recorded music, the medium will also change the way the music is created, perceived, listened to, and experienced.

FL: What does recording allow you to do that you can't do live?

FM: Taking the time to really think about what I want to present, to explore each idea and intention in depth. This time allows me to refine every aspect of the work and also to correct any missteps. I approach recording with anxiety, knowing that it will be a long process, fraught with doubts and uncertainties... Basically, making a record is already taking a gamble on fixing something on a medium, it's a question that goes far beyond the music itself, you have to ask yourself whether it's relevant. I try to maintain a fairly healthy and thoughtful relationship with this idea of making records. I like making records, but I don't commit to it lightly. It's a chance to have labels that are interested in my work and want to work with me. I see it as a kind of validation. It's a mutual commitment: I put my work into this record, and they put their trust and money into it. And since in this business, it's pretty much certain that none of us, artist or label, is going to actually make money from a record, I find that this record, this joint effort between the artist, the label, and the people who are going to buy it and, I hope, love it, becomes a poetic object. Like a book or a film, once an album is produced, it becomes something else, something that will change with each listen. Concerts, on the other hand, are something else entirely. They are a more immediate, more direct experience. There are risks, but also different challenges.

I consider these two practices to be very different but complementary, each with its own language, its own rhythm, its own demands. Whereas recording allows you to work with time and control the details, concerts offer a freedom and spontaneity that can only exist in the present moment.

FL: I thought I heard you say once, during one of our discussions, that you didn't consider yourself a musician. Why? Or rather, what is the difference between a musician and you?

FM: I don't know how to play an instrument, at least not in the conventional sense. I can't read or write music. If you put an instrument in my hands, I'm completely lost, unable to produce anything coherent, to play a melody or a tune. There was a time when I was a guitarist and songwriter in a pop-rock band, and even then, I could only play my own songs. As soon as it came to performing something else, I was stuck.

Yet, paradoxically, I write for instruments, and sometimes even play them on my records, but my approach to them is completely different from that of a traditional musician. For me, an instrument is nothing more than another sound source, just like the sound of a tree branch being broken, a train passing by, a burnt magnetic tape, or the sound of a half-destroyed autoharp. These materials have an equal place in my approach to sound: what interests me is the sound they produce, not the object

itself. In my limited experience with the guitar, the “guitar instrument” with its established codes and practices limits me and confines me to a specific register, whereas the “guitar sound object” impresses me much less. But I greatly admire the musicians for whom I sometimes write, and who, thanks to their technique and mastery, manage to modify and push the boundaries of their instrumental language. I am totally incapable of doing this.



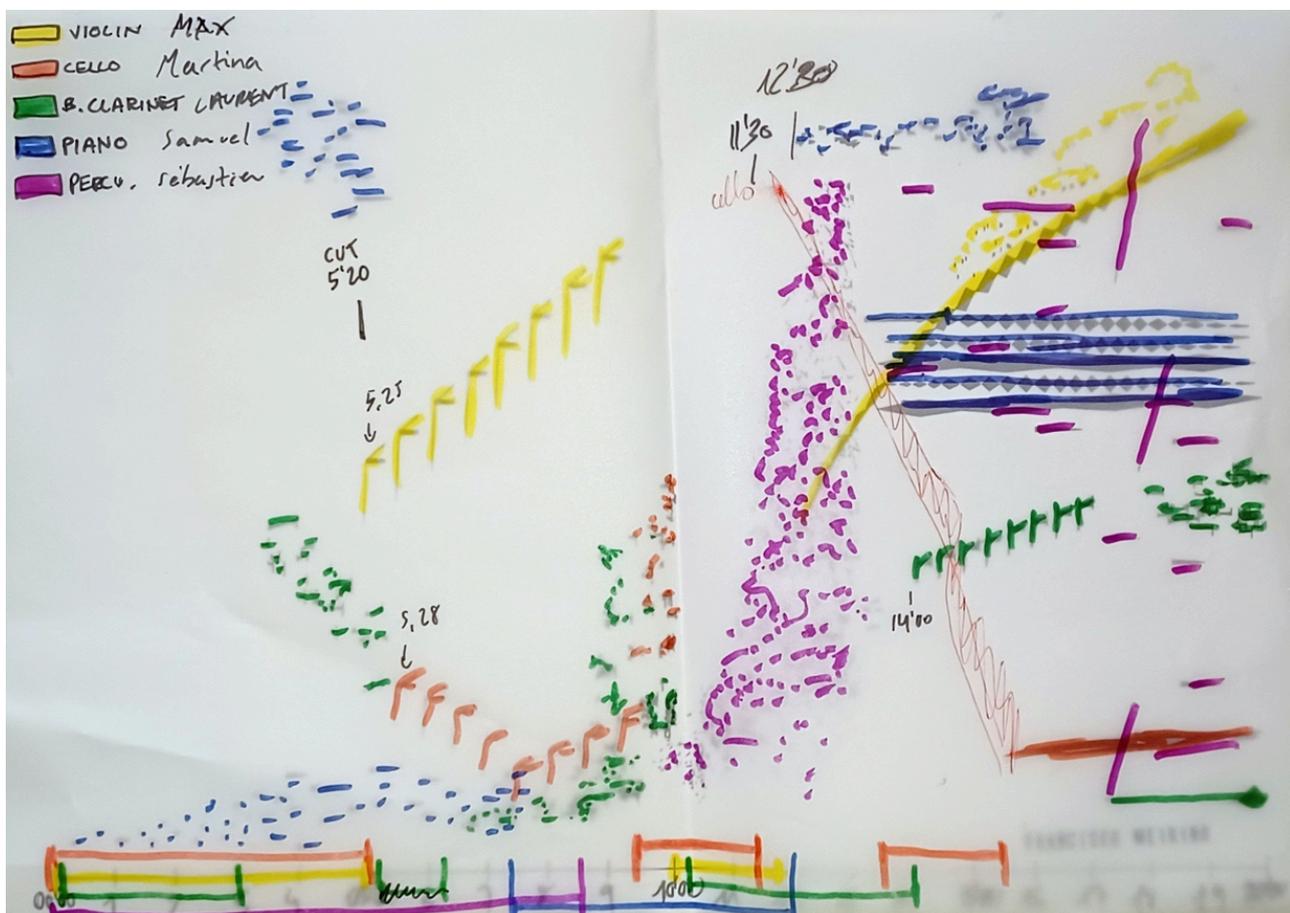
FL: You have a visual practice, that of cutting. How does this practice inspire you in your sound work? When listening to your work, we often notice moments of rupture, which reminds me of your visual work.

FM: Yes, it's quite obvious that rupture is one of the central elements of my work. This notion of rupture and tension, which runs through my entire approach, can be found in my sound practice as well as in my visual and written practice. I try to emulate my sound work in these other forms, to transpose certain principles of my musical approach into the visual universe. For example, my first writing/visual work, which I (self-)published, is a book called Transduce. This project is based on the idea of recreating a sound piece in a book, with elements such as drones, loops, and intertwining concepts. It is an attempt to apply a sound logic to the medium of the book.

In my collage work, it is this same logic of rupture that is presented: I make a cut with a cutter, obliquely, then I reorganize the image with the idea of creating something totally new from it. It's a very minimal, almost rigid approach, but I like this constraint; it forces me to look elsewhere, to search for meanings, to reinvent the image in a different way. This collage work was compiled in a small book published in 2023, entitled *Let's Keep It As Simple As Possible*. I also "wrote" this book, *Infernal Inside*, in which I took a random novel and traced almost every line with a black marker, leaving only a few words per page. These words form small entities, mini poems that, as the pages turn, juxtapose each other to tell a story in a fragmented way. It is an exploration of the idea of giving a new form to a text, deconstructing it to bring out something different, something freer, playing with the notion of content and form. This ties in with the notion of rupture: breaking with traditional structure to bring about a new perception.

FL: Your website states that when you compose for ensembles, "your pieces attempt to break down the barrier between acoustics and electronics, to make traditional instruments sound like electronic sounds without external modifications, and vice versa." How do you envision breaking down this barrier? How can these two worlds interchange?

FM: Basically, these two worlds don't seem so separate or opposed to each other to me. I feel that the boundary between them is more a product of social pressure or a certain technical virtuosity, a construct that stems from established norms and conventions. Ultimately, the issues seem to be the same, regardless of the medium. This separation often seems artificial to me. After all, electronic instruments were originally designed to imitate the sounds of acoustic instruments at a lower cost. The very idea of the synthesizer was born out of this desire to reproduce the sounds of the trumpet, piano, violin, and other instruments, but on a more affordable budget. I like the idea of reversing this logic, of turning this initial intention on its head. Why not, on the contrary, try to make traditional instruments such as the clarinet or cello imitate electronic sounds? Why not push a violin to resemble a triangle wave twisting under the effect of frequency modulation, or ask a cello to transform itself into a creaking floor, with all the richness of texture that this implies?



FL: Is there an underlying message in your recordings and your music?

FM: I don't really know, maybe that it's precisely the simple things, when they accumulate, that give us the opportunity to change our realities. These little things, which at first glance seem insignificant, actually have the power to allow us to express ourselves in a more direct way, without frills or too many artifices. I like the idea that nothing is set in stone, nothing is permanent. Reality is always changing, and we have the opportunity to shape it in our own way.

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Written interview conducted in French, in 2025
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