

# OMV Klangpark

Since the very first Ars Electronica, the Festival and the Linzer Klangwolke have constituted a not always programmatic but nevertheless associative entity. The idea of the Klangwolke as an early form of "art in public spaces" is also the conceptual basis of the *Klangpark*. In contrast to the *Klangwolke*, which is usually staged with a single work as its centerpiece, the principle at the heart of the Klangpark's mise-en-scène is the confrontation of a variety of methods of musical arrangement through the collaboration of internationally renowned artists representing different generations with one artistic "mastermind." Following Michael Nyman's work last year, Alexander Balanescu will play this role in 2000.

The Klangpark in the Donaupark is physically delineated by four loudspeaker towers that will fill the space within them with sound for 15 hours during each day of the Festival. The Donaupark, a popular place for relaxation and recreation situated right on the banks of the Danube in downtown Linz, is a classic example of what is commonly meant by the term "public space." The actual motif of this musical project is thus to create a conception of "space" and "the public sphere" in keeping with the linkage of this local venue to the entire geographical region of the river whose name it shares, as well as evoking associations with the virtual space of global networks.



Foto: Robert Worby

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## Klangpark 2000

### a soundtrack for the Danube

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*Klangpark 2000—a soundtrack for the Danube*—The river is the artery pumping the economic and cultural blood linking central and eastern Europe. We are at a critical point in the history of the region, on the brink of a wider and more comprehensive integration.

However, true integration is only possible through understanding and an exchange of ideas. The river carries memories of suffering and turmoil, but also the hopes and aspirations of a myriad of peoples and cultures.

In this context, I chose the songs of Maria Tanase as the nucleus of inspiration for the musical material of *Klangpark*. Maria Tanase was born in 1913 and died in 1963 in Bucharest, Romania, becoming the greatest Romanian popular singer creating a musical genre that is uniquely individual. Coming from a gypsy cultural background, she collected and reworked songs from all the different regions of Romania and made them very much her own. At the core of her art is the fatalistic Romanian folk philosophy, with its central idea of the transience of existence.

She used her voice as an instrument of extreme emotions—desperation, elation, sarcastic bitterness, hysterical laughter, meshed together with complete control. Ultimately, she passed on a bittersweet message about the transcendence of daily suffering by ordinary people.

I see this legacy, rich in emotional and musical material, as an appropriate catalyst for the inception of this Danube “soundtrack”. In the same way that Maria Tanase collected songs and transformed them, I took this material and recomposed it, filtering it through my own personal experience. I propose that the other artists of *Klangpark* also let themselves be touched by this material and react with surprising responses.

We used a different song every day as the focal point. *Lume Lume* (“World, dear World”), *Tulnicul* (“The mountain call”), *Doina Recrutiiilor* (“Song of the conscripts”), *Bun li vinul Ghiughiuului* (“Wine, oh great wine”), *Trenule, masina mica* (“Train or car”), *Cintec de leagan* (“lullaby”).

Through the use of technology, in the physical and virtual realm, I proposed reviving the “ghost” (spirit) of Maria Tanase with music that would be slowly, and yet instantly, carried and caressed by the Danube and the electronic flow, gently and lovingly, back home; reflected, reworked, rethought, refiltered, refelt.



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Maria Tanase was born on September 25, 1913 and died June 22nd, 1963 in Bucharest.

She transcended her career as a folk singer, becoming a great star of the stage as well, performing in operettas by Audran and Benatzki, and even Weill's “3Three Penny Opera.”

Between the wars she performed in the best known clubs in Bucharest—“Wilson”, “Parcul Aro”, “Continental”—and in 1937 sang at the World Exhibition in New York. In 1938 she made her debut on the radio, which had a tremendous impact on her career.

Maria Tanase was one of those rare artists who refuse to acknowledge a separation between musical fields, and achieve legendary status through powerful and direct communication with a wide audience.

She recorded for Lifa, Columbia, Electrecord, and was awarded a prize by the Academy Charles Cros for a recording in the French language, made for *Le Chant du Monde*.