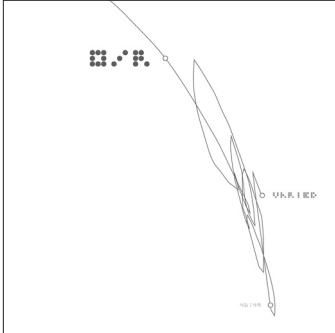


PRESS RELEASE

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O/R | VARIED

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O/r is Nousei Sakata (*0) and Richard Chartier. *Varied* is the follow up to 1999's highly sought after self titled release *O/r* (12k1006), recently noted in Computer Music Journal essay "The Aesthetics of Failure: Post-Digital Tendencies in Contemporary Computer Music" by Kim Cascone (MIT Press, USA) in its discography of resources for listening). While *O/r* suggested a sense of chaos with its jarring and syncopated digital sound, *Varied* utilizes much more refined compositional techniques to create highly deliberate passages of whispering sine waves, extreme frequencies, and looping rhythms of noise and detailed sonic pops.

Nousei Sakata, who records under the moniker *0, is from Tokyo, Japan. He is part of the new wave of Japanese minimalists exploring computerized anti-music and the conceptual aspect of implied silence. *0 means "multiplied by zero" hence all answers to such a calculation are zero, and as a result *0 means "nothing". The main concept of *0's works centers around the Japanese thought of "mu"(nothing)... creating all things from an implied nothing.

Richard Chartier, minimal sound artist/composer and graphic designer, has recorded critically acclaimed recordings for Trente Oiseaux (Germany), LINE (USA), Meme (Japan), Fallt (Ireland), as well collaborative works with Nousei Sakata (*0) and Taylor Deupree on 12k (USA) and has been featured on a number of international compilations including last year's comprehensive *Clicks & Cuts 2* (Mille Plateaux, Germany). For his cd *Series*, Chartier was awarded one of twelve Honorable Mentions in the category of Digital Music by the prestigious Prix Ars Electronica, 2001 (Linz, Austria). This work is also being exhibited in the Whitney Biennial 2002 at the Whitney Museum of American Art (NY) March-May 2002. Chartier's work explores the relationship between sound, silence and the act of listening. With Taylor Deupree, he founded the recording label LINE, as a subdivision of 12k focusing new, digital, conceptual, minimalist sound art.

[THE WIRE, UK]

...O/r create a largely abstract music which avoids traps set by familiarity... Here, with Sakata, Chartier uses rhythm to a greater degree than on his solo recordings, although the results are far from motoric. And despite Sakata's solo work being described as "computerised anti-music" exploring "the conceptual aspect of implied silence," this collaborative effort is extremely musical. It makes telling use of space rather than silence—implied or otherwise... the cd's nine pieces, all entitled varied, might constitute a suite, but it's not a cohesive one, like the title suggests. yet it works particularly well on shuffle play, in which the spaces around sound events are fractionally reconfigured. as the narrative possibilities increase, they become ever more elusive.

[BLOW UP, ITALY]

... a small labyrinth of microexplosions, almost unnoticed pyrotechnics, pops and creaking grains strategically placed in the space-time shoal which seem to have the precise destination to converge towards some alien melodic form.

[AMBIENTRANCE, US]

Not-so-much virtual silence is semi-regularly interrupted by nanomechanical entities which chitter, pip and click through VARIED teeny-tiny circumstances conceived and executed by the O/R equation. I may not always know what's going on exactly, but this time around I'm not frustratingly deaf to the enigmatic occurrences, so can enjoy their obtuse anti-musical goings-on at least on that level. Dazzlingly indefinable and expertly accomplished. A-

[VITAL WEEKLY, THE NETHERLANDS]

Together they offer eight tracks, which is the best of both their worlds. From low end drones, to high pitched beeps and the looped samples of concrete sounds (like the musicbox in "Varied_06:48"), it's not easy to access music. The dynamics are great, from the soft to loud, and the ideas per track minimal, but with enough action to keep you alert... One could easily conclude that this is indeed a varied CD of various approaches of microsound. (FdW)