

Brainwashed - Beatriz Ferreyra, "Echos+"

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Beatriz Ferreyra, former pupil of Gorgy Ligeti, is an experimental music composer with many distinguished accolades. An academic who has published notable papers, she now works as a free composer taking commissions for concerts, festivals, ballets, and films. On *Echos+*, we hear her in peak form crafting intriguing and unique experiments in vocal manipulation. She uses the voice as base material for stereo-shifting computer music creations that arrest and delight.

[Room 40](#)

The album is split into three pieces that are entirely different in character. The first piece, "Echos," is a wildly inventive chorus of sampled vocalizations and spoken phrases, drawn together in a patch quilt symphony built entirely of the human voice. This is not just a simple stringing together of voice recordings like Christmas lights; it is an incredibly dynamic nine minute song with sudden stops and crescendos and palpable vibrancy. Words fail to describe the surprising results, a meticulously built, sonorous joy to listen to.

The second piece, "L'autre ... ou le chant des Marecages," where the word chant could be translated as 'song' but actually more accurately describes the piece when translated as the cognate 'chant.' It opens with strong imagery of Gregorian chant, then takes a turn for the more mysterious with sound manipulations that evoke horror and alarm. Again, the principal texture here is the human voice.

The third and final piece, "L'autre rive," apparently departs from vocal sample as instrument, though it is difficult to tell what the source samples are for these electronic machinations. Full of action and punch, it does not rest long on an idea. Percussion adds a strong element of drama, making this conclusion feel like a film score for the jungle.

Echos+ is a masterwork of a composer who is well versed in her tools and patient enough to imbue her creation with unlimited subtlety and detail, and I have thoroughly enjoyed it.

[samples available here](#)