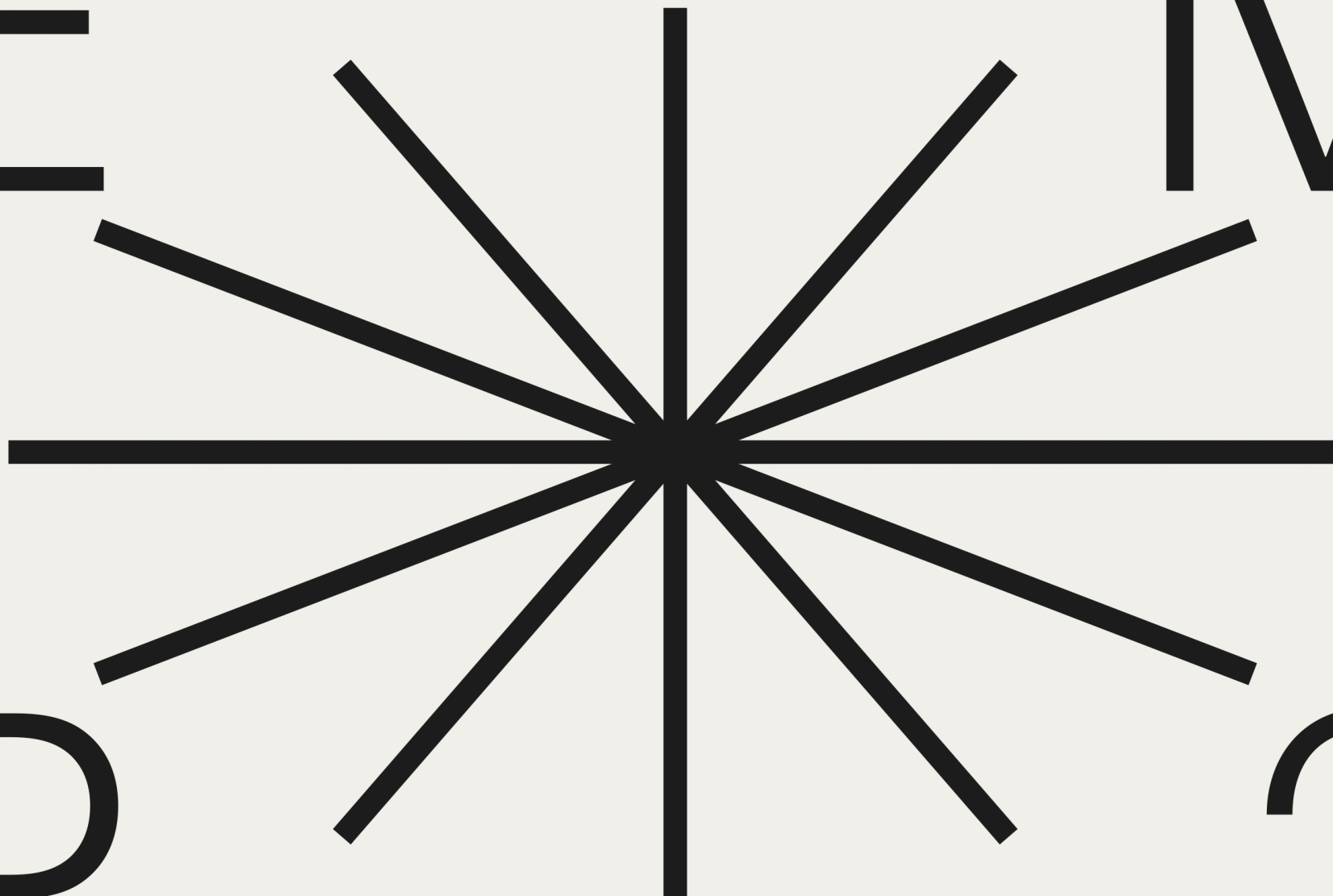


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3

Symphonie  
magnétophonique

Else Marie Pade (1924–2016)

## EMP 3

Else Marie Pade, electronics

1 *Symphonie magnétophonique* (1958)

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20:03



Else Marie Pade, 2006

## A Tribute to the Sounds of Everyday Life

By Jonas Olesen

From 1958 to 1959, Else Marie Pade collaborated closely with sound technician Sven Drehn-Knudsen from DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation) to create the work *Symphonie magnétophonique* – a symphony for magnetic tape. The first broadcast of the piece was as part of the Danish radio series on electronic music, *Musik i atomalderen* (Music in the Atomic Age), in 1959.

Pade and Drehn-Knudsen's aim with *Symphonie magnétophonique* was to musically depict a day and night in Copenhagen, selecting a range of sounds one might hear during a 24-hour period in the Danish capital. Pade described the soundscape as “... snoring, alarm clocks, toothbrushing, and a whistling kettle – all familiar morning sounds. Then, we venture out into the world, to work, to Tivoli, to a restaurant, and back home to bed.”

Reportedly, James Joyce's modernist novel *Ulysses* (1922) provided inspiration for the work, offering a unique perspective into the various sounds that can be heard during a day in a metropolis. Additionally, composer Luciano Berio's electroacoustic *Thema*

(*Omaggio a Joyce*) (1958) for voice and tape may have played a significant role in inspiring Pade. Berio's piece is based on a reading of the 11th chapter of *Ulysses* and reprocesses it electroacoustically. It is worth considering whether German filmmaker Walter Ruttmann's well-known sound collage *Wocheende* (1930), which humorously celebrates daily life in Berlin and was produced and edited like a feature film, could have served as a third source of inspiration for Pade's *Symphonie magnétophonique*. However, it is unclear whether Pade was acquainted with the work.

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Considered a cornerstone of Else Marie Pade's oeuvre in the *musique concrète* tradition, *Symphonie magnétophonique* involves the electronic manipulation of real-world sounds. As early as 1952, Pade travelled to Paris to meet with the genre's founder, Pierre Schaeffer, who was working with the French radio studios at the time. Pade and Drehn-Knudsen developed a “realisation

score” of 47 pages for the work, which includes instructions such as “12 bars of hammering with a hammer in 4/4 time and nine bars of toothbrushing in 4/16 time.” Even from the score, one can detect a strong sense of humour in the work, which is further confirmed upon listening.

Contrasting the humorous and slightly bizarre content, the title of *Symphonie magnétophonique* is rather pompous, giving the work an aura of grandeur and solemnity. However, upon listening to the piece, it becomes clear that the title should be understood as, if not entirely ironic, then at least somewhat more down-to-earth: As a symphony of everyday sounds, captured on magnetic tape.

All the sounds in *Symphonie magnétophonique* are real-world sounds, such as cars, footsteps, voices, and cooking sounds. Pade recorded some of the sounds herself using a microphone, either in the studio or elsewhere, while others were sourced from DR's sound archive of pre-recorded sounds.

Some of the sound material has subsequently been manipulated to a greater or lesser extent using editing techniques and speed changes, carried out on reel-to-reel tape recorders, while others remain completely unaltered.

*Symphonie magnétophonique* can best be de-

scribed as a “musical” sound collage, unfolding a narrative that is intended to illustrate the day from morning to evening. At the same time, the work seeks to “musicalize” the particular sound material through electronic treatments, linking together rhythmic patterns and repetitions. This duality is already evident in the opening, where one hears filtered bird song treated with artificial reverberation. The bird song is recognizable as such, but it also possesses an extra, abstract layer.

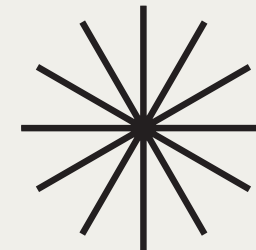
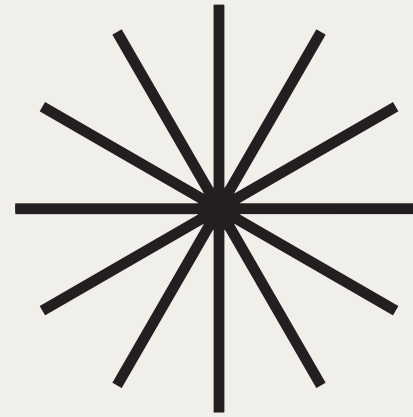
The real-world sounds are present throughout the work, clearly recognizable but almost always subjected to some form of electronic treatment. These treatments range from radical modulation, reverse playback, and drastic speed changes to more subtle timbral adjustments, such as soft echoes or gentle filtering.

At the beginning of the piece, typical morning sounds are heard in the form of the town hall bells from the Copenhagen City Hall and the sound of a ticking alarm clock, which slowly increases in volume before finally ringing. Later, typing sounds from a typewriter are heard, indicating that work is underway. Voices are heard, including those from *Pressens Radioavis* (the daily radio news programme), where individual words are repeated in tape loops, and the voice is heavily modulated by what sounds like a ring modulator. Throughout the

work, all voices are treated with heavy modulation or “unnatural” high pitch – in other words, they do not appear in a naturalistic form.

The soundscape of *Symphonie magnétophonique* is also characterised by short musical quotations, such as fragments of classical music and a recurring flute melody in a tape loop. At times, complex and almost polyrhythmic progressions arise when multiple tape loops are layered and displaced. It is in these moments that the work's aim to “musicalize” the sound material is most clear. Towards the conclusion of the piece, the atmosphere shifts to a more contemplative mood, with an electronic lullaby accompanied by the sound of a beating heart, before the piece reaches its finale.

*Symphonie magnétophonique* can be considered as a fusion of a narrative sound collage and *musique concrète*. With its extensive manipulations of its sound material and entire soundscape, the work is both humorous and entertaining, yet it also contains dramatic undertones. The overall expression is radical and insistent, and combined with the duality between music and narrative, it makes *Symphonie magnétophonique* a unique and distinctive work in Danish music history.



*Symphonie magnétophonique* has previously been released on CD on the album *Face It* by Dacapo Records, 8.224233 (2002). The complete handwritten score is printed in Inge Bruland (Ed.): *Else Marie Pade and Symphonie magnétophonique*, Museum Tusculanum (2006).

## Else Marie Pade

Else Marie Pade (1924–2016) grew up in Aarhus, where she received piano lessons as a child and teenager, and sang and played in a jazz orchestra. Through her piano teacher Karen Brieg (1894–1962), she became an active member of the Danish wartime resistance until 1944, when she was detained by occupying German troops and imprisoned in Frøslev prison camp, where she composed several songs.

After the war, from 1946 to 1950, she studied piano at the Royal Academy of Music in Copenhagen and then began private composition studies with composers Vagn Holmboe and Jan Maegaard, among others.

In 1956, she joined Statsradiofonien, now DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation), which became her foundation, as here she could use her studies to create her works and at the same time have them broadcast.

It was also through the radio that she heard *musique concrète* (a recorded montage of natural sounds often electronically modified and presented as a musical composition) by Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry in 1952. The music made such

an impression on her that she arranged a visit to Schaeffer in Paris – a meeting that was to have a decisive impact on the rest of her career.

In 1955, Pade premiered her first *concrète* composition *En dag på Dyrehavsbakken* (*A Day at the Fair*), which she made for a TV documentary: an artistic, concrete-musical portrait of the fair that became the starting point for a long series of productions in which Pade, together with alternating studio technicians at DR, experimented with electronic equipment as a kind of basic sonic research. The exploration of possibilities resulted in everything from individual sound effects as background in children's fairy tales to purely electronic, concrete works created from carefully prepared scores.

Looking at Else Marie Pade's output as a whole, the picture that emerges is one of a rare combination of genres. Already during the Second World War, Pade composed more popular songs and shows, and later both relatively traditional and modernist classical works, which towards the end of her career, took on an increasingly explicit religious character.

When these works are viewed through the same lens as her electronic and concrete works, it can be difficult to see an overall connection, even though Pade seems to have found it natural to

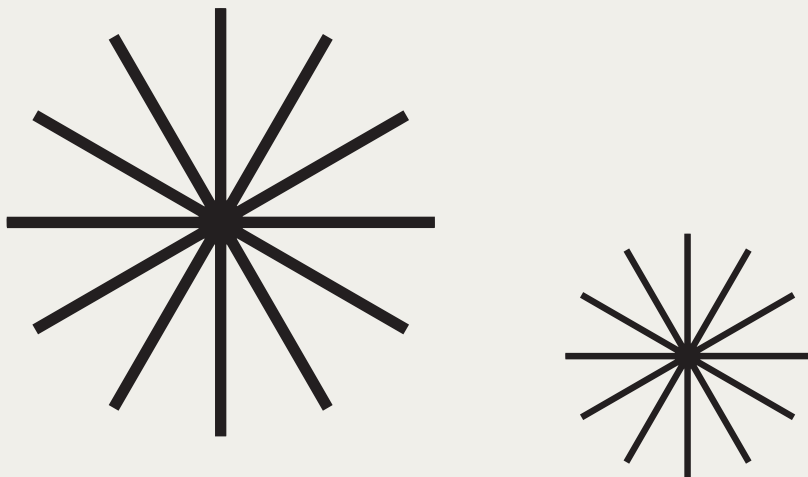
alternate between these very different musical forms and expressions. This broad practice testifies that her compositional talent was exceptionally multifaceted and complex, ranging from early sea songs to minimalist electronic works.

However, the great public interest in Pade's electronic music has meant that her other classical and popular output is little known, partly because much of it has never been recorded or published. Many works have also been in Pade's home as sheet music and are thus completely unknown.

## About *EMP Series*

*EMP Series*, a collaborative effort between Dacapo Records and publisher Edition·S, offers a fresh, exclusively digital perspective on Pade's extraordinary music, featuring numerous works that were previously unavailable or unmentioned in Pade's literature. These include 80 reel-to-reel tapes and a wealth of compositions and recordings from her tenure as an employee at DR (Danish Broadcasting Corporation), which were discovered following her passing in 2016.

By assembling landmark, rare, and previously unheard recordings, *EMP Series* provides a renewed interpretation of Pade's works and places them in a musical context. Regular releases will continue into 2024, marking the centenary of Else Marie Pade's birth and celebrating her remarkable sonic world in an immersive fashion.





## En hyldest til hverdagens lyde

Af Jonas Olesen

I årene 1958-59 realiserede Else Marie Pade i tæt samarbejde med lydteknikeren Sven Drehn-Knudsen fra Danmarks Radio værket *Symphonie magnétophonique* – en symfoni for magnetbånd. Værket blev udsendt første gang i forbindelse med DR-programserien om elektronisk musik, Musik i atomalderen, i 1959.

Else Marie Pade og Drehn-Knudsen søgte med *Symphonie magnétophonique* musikalsk at illustrere et døgn i København med et udvalg af de forskellige lyde, man ville høre i løbet af 24 timer i den danske hovedstad. Pade beskrev selv lyduniverset som ”... snorkelyde, vækkeur, tandbørstning og en kedel, der fløjter – alle sammen velkendte morgenlyde. Herefter tages vi ud i verden, på arbejde, i Tivoli, på restaurant og hjem i seng igen.”

Inspirationskilden var angiveligt James Joyces modernistiske roman *Ulysses* (1922), der giver et unikt indblik i de forskellige lyde, som kan høres i løbet af et døgn i en storby. Ud over dette kan komponisten Luciano Berios elektroakustiske *Thema (Omaggio a Joyce)* (1958) for stemme og bånd også have spillet en betydelig rolle for Pade.

Værket bygger på en oplæsning af det 11. kapitel i netop *Ulysses* og genbehandler det elektroakustisk. Man kan heller ikke undgå at tænke på, om en tredje inspirationskilde til Pades *Symphonie magnétophonique* kunne være den kendte lydcollage *Wochenende* (1930) af den tyske filminstruktør Walter Ruttmann (1887-1941), der på elleve minutter humoristisk hylder hverdagen i Berlin og er produceret og klippet efter spillefilmsprincipper. Det vides imidlertid ikke, om Pade har været bekendt med værket.

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*Symphonie magnétophonique* står i dag som et helt centralt værk af Else Marie Pade i den såkaldte *musique concrète*-tradition, hvor grundlaget er elektronisk bearbejdning af konkrete lyde. Så tidligt som i 1952 havde Pade rejst til Paris for at møde genrens ophavsmand Pierre Schaeffer, der arbejdede med basis i den franske radios studier.

Pade og Drehn-Knudsen udarbejdede et ”realiseringspartitur” på 47 sider til værket, hvor ek-

sempelvis ”12 takters hamren med en hammer i 4/4-takt og ni takters tandbørstning i 4/16-takt” angives. Allerede i partituret kan man ane, at værket har et betydeligt humoristisk præg, hvilket bekræftes, når man lytter til det.

Det humoristiske, lettere bizarre indhold kontrasteres dog af den pompøse titel *Symphonie magnétophonique*, der giver værket en aura af noget stortladent og højtideligt. Når man lytter til *Symphonie magnétophonique*, bliver det imidlertid tydeligt, at titlen skal forstås, om ikke ironisk, så dog noget mere jordbunden: Som en symfoni over dagliglivets lyde, fastholdt på magnetbånd.

Samtlige lyde i *Symphonie magnétophonique* er konkrete lyde af for eksempel biler, fodtrin, stemmer og stegelyde fra et køkken. En del af er optaget til lejligheden med mikrofon, enten i studiet eller af Pade selv. Andre er fundet i DR's lydarkiv af præindspillede lyde til brug i eksempelvis hørespil. En del af lyd materialet er efterfølgende manipuleret mere eller mindre ved hjælp af klippeteknikker og hastighedsændringer, der er foretaget på spolebåndoptagere, mens andre fremstår helt umanipulerede.

*Symphonie magnétophonique* kan bedst beskrives som en ”musikalsk” lydcollage, der udfolder et narrativt forløb, der skal illustrere døgnet fra morgen

til aften. Samtidig søger værket at ”musikalisere” det konkrete lyd materiale ved hjælp af elektroniske behandlinger, sammenklippede rytmiseringer og gentagelser. Denne dobbelthed er tydelig allerede i ansatsen, hvor man hører filtreret fuglesang behandlet med kunstig efterklang. Fuglesangen er genkendelig som sådan, men den besidder samtidig et ekstra, abstrakt lag.

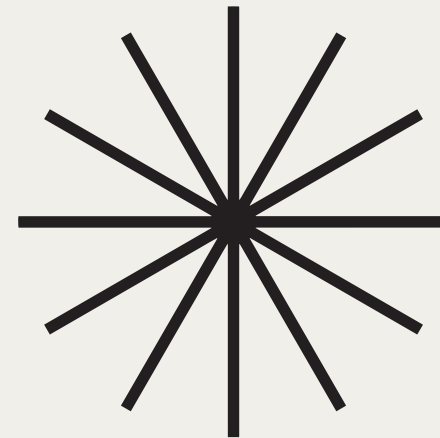
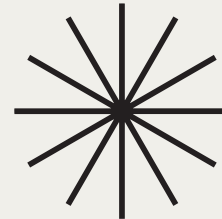
De konkrete lyde optræder gennemgående tydeligt genkendelige i værket, men de optræder næsten konstant med en eller anden form for elektronisk behandling, der varierer i styrke fra radikale modulationer, baglæns afspilning og kraftige hastighedsændringer til mere subtile klangændringer som for eksempel svage ekkoer eller nænsom filtrering.

I begyndelsen høres typiske morgenlyde i form af rådhusklokkerne fra Københavns Rådhus og lyden af et tikkende vækkeur, der langsomt tager til i lydstyrke, før uret endelig ringer. Senere høres tastelyde fra en skrivemaskine, der indikerer, at arbejdet er i gang. Der høres stemmer, blandt andet fra Pressens Radioavis, hvor enkelte ord gentages i båndsløjfer, og stemmen moduleres kraftigt af, hvad der lyder som en ringmodulator. Gennemgående er alle stemmer i værket behandlet med kraftig modulation eller ”unaturlig” høj tonehøjde – de optræder med andre ord ikke i naturalistisk form.

Lydbilledet i *Symphonie magnétophonique* er desuden kendetegnet ved at indeholde korte musikciter, såsom fragmenter af klassisk musik og en gentaget fløjtemelodi i en båndsløjfe. Nogle gange opstår der komplekse, næsten polyrytmiske forløb, når flere båndsløjfer lægges i lag og forskydes. Det er her, at værkets intention om at "musikalisere" det konkrete lydmateriale tydeligst træder frem. Mod slutningen af værket skifter atmosfæren til en mere kontemplativ stemning, hvor en slags elektronisk vuggeviser høres sammen med lyden af et bankende hjerte, før værket når sin afslutning.

*Symphonie magnétophonique* kan betragtes som en sammensmeltning af narrativ lydcollage og konkret musik. Med dens omfattende manipulationer af lyd materialet og hele lyduniverset, er værket både humoristisk og underholdende, men det besidder også dramatiske undertoner. Det samlede udtryk er radikalt og insisterende, og i kombination med dobbeltheden mellem musik og narrativ gør det *Symphonie magnétophonique* til et unikt og særegent værk i dansk musikhistorie.

*Symphonie magnétophonique* er tidligere udgivet som cd på albummet *Face It*, Dacapo Records, 8.224233 (2002). Det komplette håndskrevne partitur er aftrykt i Inge Bruland (Red.): Else Marie Pade og *Symphonie magnétophonique*, Museum Tusulanum (2006).



## Else Marie Pade

Else Marie Pade (1924–2016) voksede op i Aarhus, hvor hun som barn og ung modtog klaverundervisning og som teenager sang og spillede i et jazzorkester. Gennem sin klaverlærerinde Karen Brieg (1894–1962) kom hun under besættelsen ind i modstandsarbejde, men blev anholdt af Gestapo i 1944 og senere indsat som fange i Frøslevlejren, hvor hun blandt andet komponerede en række sange.

Efter krigen studerede hun først klaver på Det Kongelige Danske Musikkonservatorium (1946–50) og påbegyndte derefter private kompositionsstudier hos blandt andre komponisterne Vagn Holmboe og Jan Maegaard.

I 1956 blev hun ansat på Statsradiofonien – det nuværende DR. DR blev hendes fundament, da hun her kunne anvende studierne til at skabe sine værker og samtidig få dem udsendt.

Det er ligeledes gennem radioen, at hun i 1952 hører *musique concrète* (konkret musik) af Pierre Schaeffer og Pierre Henry. Musikken gør så stort indtryk på hende, at hun får foranstaltet et besøg hos Schaeffer i Paris – et møde, der bliver udslagsgivende for resten af hendes karriere. I første

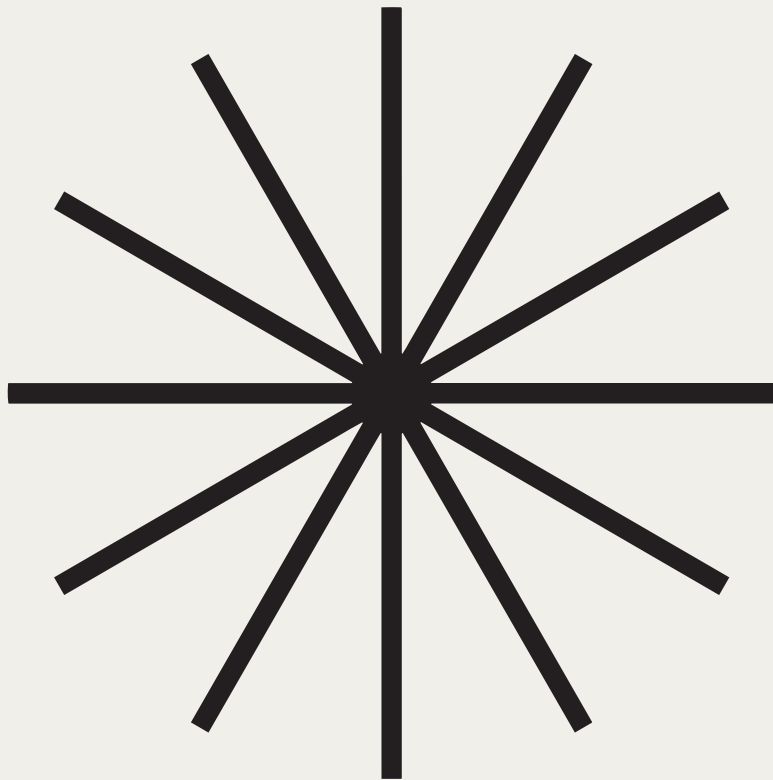
omgang anvender hun konkret musik i tv-projektet *En dag på Dyrehavsbakken* (1955): et kunstnerisk, konkretmusikalsk portræt af Bakken, der bliver startskuddet til en lang række produktioner, hvor Pade sammen med vekslende studieteknikere i Danmarks Radio eksperimenterede med det elektroniske udstyr som en slags lydlig grundforskning. Afsøgningen af mulighederne resulterede i alt fra enkelte lydeffekter til brug som underlægning i eventyr for børn til rent elektroniske, konkrete værker skabt med forlæg i omhyggeligt udarbejdede partiturer.

Når man betragter Else Marie Pades samlede produktion, tegner der sig et billede af en sjælden kombination af genrer. Allerede under Anden Verdenskrig komponerede Pade mere populært orienterede sange og viser, og senere både relativt traditionelle og modernistiske klassiske værker, der mod slutningen af hendes karriere fik et mere og mere eksplicit religiøst præg.

Når disse værker anskues med samme optik som hendes elektroniske og konkrete værker, kan det umiddelbart være svært at se en overordnet sammenhæng, selvom Pade selv tilsyneladende har fundet det naturligt at veksle mellem disse meget forskellige musikformer og udtryk. Denne brede praksis vidner om, at hendes kompositoriske talent var særdeles mangefacetteret og sammensat,

vekslende fra tidlige sømandsviser til minimalistiske elektronværker.

Den store offentlige interesse for Pades elektroniske musik har imidlertid bevirket, at hendes øvrige klassiske og populære produktion er meget lidt kendt, hvilket også skyldes, at en stor del af denne ikke har været indspillet eller udgivet. Mange af værkerne har også befundet sig som noder i Pades hjem og således været fuldstændig ukendte.



## Om *EMP Series*

Med *EMP Series* præsenterer Dacapo Records og musikforlaget Edition·S Pades unikke musik i nye, udelukkende digitale udgaver, der omfatter adskillige værker, der hidtil har været utilgængelige eller ikke nævnt i Pade-litteraturen – blandt andet de 80 spolebånd og et væld af værker og optagelser fra hendes tid som ansat ved Danmarks Radio, der dukkede op efter hendes død i 2016.

*EMP Series* samler skelsættende indspilninger, sjældne og aldrig før hørte optagelser for at genfortælle, fortolke og sætte Pades værker i musikalsk relief. Udgivelserne udkommer regelmæssigt frem til 2024, hvor Else Marie Pade ville være fyldt 100 år – for at fejre hendes vidunderlige lydverden på en måde, der indbyder til fordybelse.

*Symphonie magnétophonique* was first radio broadcast in the programme *Musik i atomalderen* (Music in the Atomic Age) on DR on 4 April 1959, directed by Mogens Andersen and with an introduction by Vagn Kappel.

Digitisation by Hans Peter Stubbe Teglbjærg (2019)

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Liner notes by Jonas Olesen

Photo p. 3 © Lisbeth Damgaard

Design: Studio Tobias Røder, [www.tobiasroeder.com](http://www.tobiasroeder.com)

Publisher: Edition·S, [www.edition-s.dk](http://www.edition-s.dk)

With support from Augustinus Fonden, A.P. Møller Fonden, Aage og Johanne Louis-Hansens Fond, Koda Kultur, Konsul Georg Jorck og Hustru Emma Jock's Fond and Sonning Fonden.



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DANMARKS NATIONALE  
MUSIKANTOLOGI

Dacapo Records, Denmark's national record label, was founded in 1989 with the purpose of releasing the best of Danish music past and present. The majority of our recordings are world premieres, and we are dedicated to producing music of the highest international standards.