

Avant Music News

<https://avantmusicnews.com/2019/05/20/amn-reviews-cristiano-calcagnile-stma-we-insist-wein02/?fbclid=IwAR1aJFOHgoVbm0TG-6bnwJA4DFNovtAXRHFEkqSrCWn9dEGYi3xe12PRwuY>

ST()MA, the six-part suite by percussionist Cristiano Calcagnile, is a mosaic of reconciled opposites: acoustic and electronic instruments, pitched and unpitched sounds, extended and conventional techniques.

Calcagnile, a native of Milan, is an instrumentalist and composer engaged in a variety of activities. His background includes classical studies as well as jazz performance; one of his notable projects is the Ensemble Multikulti Cherry On, an eight-piece group of winds, violin, drums, piano and world percussion inspired by the world jazz of Don Cherry. ST()MA finds him in a solo performance, albeit one fortified by an elaborate array of different instruments centered on, but by no means overshadowed by, a large drum kit.

As Calcagnile acknowledges in his note to the recording, ST()MA was a work of catharsis provoked by a deep personal loss. As a concept work it was organized around the idea, signaled by its title, of an opening or transitional space both connecting and defining inside and outside. A passage, in other words, and a void, all at once. The music is at times heavy and dense thanks not only to some energetic drumming, but to the generous use of electronics and a kind of four-string tabletop electric guitar played with an ebow. At other times the sound is less saturated and even delicate, for example when tuned percussion are brought into play. Throughout, Calcagnile demonstrates himself to be an accomplished layerer of sound in addition to being a gifted percussionist; with ST()MA he has succeeded in creating a complex, challenging work.

ST()MA is also noteworthy for being put together as a multimedia package comprising an LP of music, a DVD and an accompanying set of photographs.

Daniel Barbiero