

Oscar van Dillen
Kudsi Erguner



DRONE
SCAPE 6.1

Oneirology 2

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Dronescape 6.1

Dronescape 6.1 is the seventh in a series of albums, containing new Digital Symphonies by Oscar van Dillen. The work on this album was composed January-May 2021.

Music was created By Oscar van Dillen and Kudsi Erguner; cover art of this album was created by Oscar van Dillen.

Similar to the earlier Dronescape releases, this work can be considered to be an **Electronic or Digital Symphony**. This one-part collaborative work is called **Oneirology 2**.

Dronescape 6.1 is the second in a subseries, a kind of dreaming space in which Erguner's Ney is featured; the following releases will contain further collaborative versions with additional musicians, adding new original layers of music and meaning to this work.

Dronescape

The title Dronescape suggests the contraction of the terms *Drone* and *Soundscape*, inferring a music which might at first sight be mistaken for ambient only. But not at a hearing: there is mostly a friendly and pleasant surface character to most compositions, but careful listening will reveal less obvious details and sounds, sometimes surprising, at other times perhaps disturbing.

In music, a *drone* (or *bourdon*) is understood to be a continuous sound, interval or chord, usually an accompaniment to a modal structure (melodic music based on a particular scale). Special instruments exist, dedicated to playing the drone only, such as the *tanpura* and the *swar peti* from India. Instruments are found all over the world that include drones within the melodic instruments themselves, such as the *taraf* strings on many Asian string instruments, but also the drone pipes next to the *chanter* in bagpipes, or the hurdy gurdy, and its predecessor the *organistrum* with their drone strings. Aboriginal didgeridoo music can be considered to consist

purely of a rhythmized drone. Traditionally, drones with their sustained pitches are used as a harmonic support to the melodic music performed. In the *Drones* by van Dillen the music itself has become rhythmized drone and soundscape at the same time, foregoing the traditional compositional hierarchies of theme and accompaniment, by using the following musical elements, in order of prominence: 1. sound 2. harmony 3. rhythm 4. melody. This non-prominence of melody stresses the absence of a traditional theme and accompaniment-oriented music, instead the work moves towards a more inclusive approach. This does not mean there are no developing linear structures, but rather that in a way the album can perhaps be regarded as being semipermeable to outside additions, whether coincidental and random (such as happening when listening outdoor or with windows opened), or improvised, or composed, or even as a large *minus one recording*, open to be supplemented by the listener, whether in imagined or performed future additional music.

Oneirology

In our current times of SARS-Covid pandemic, art in general, more specifically exhibitions, concerts and music performances and other events where an audience can meet creative artists, have in general been cancelled and made practically impossible in most places, mostly by government regulations that have so far proven to be as ineffective against the virus as they have been effective at disconnecting people. *Divide et rege* in action?

In our days, the world seems to be coming apart, coming apart again, we may be tempted to think, as humanity seems to have dealt with this before in the past. Indeed, there have been many past ages in which prophets of a kind have proclaimed the end of the world, with solutions offered within the context of their beliefs, mostly irrational solutions to irrational problems. Apocalyptic visions have thus helped establish many a tyrant in history. People that do not distinguish between belief and knowledge are tempted to believe that the current crises modern

Science describes are no different from similar historical situations. There are vital differences however, among which the rational nature of the problem descriptions. Most importantly, this time we can objectively observe the crises in progress: today we are facing real and planetary existential threats, not just to ourselves, but to most life.

To name three of these existential threats:

1. *Human Waste* (do we recall the plastics we see everywhere outdoors, are we aware that part of it is making us sterile in the next decades to come, which means possibly no more babies can be conceived and no more will be born?),
2. *Planetary Climate Change* (have we noticed the weather patterns change everywhere, and lack or overabundance of rainfalls in places, as well as some rivers ceasing to flow and others starting to regularly overflow, beginning to make large areas uninhabitable in the foreseeable future, are we aware that safe access to clean sweet water is fundamentally needed for all life, have we noticed

the unusual heat and cold waves accompanying the changing patterns of precipitation?),

3. *Artificial Intelligence* (merely the next technology it seems, but what is it used for -and it certainly is used globally already- how does it affect every aspect of daily life, not just human, and most importantly: who will decide on how to regulate its use, whom will we elect to defend us from the existential threats, which politicians, often said to be notoriously analphabetic where websites, online multinationals, automated systems, digital technologies and computers in general are concerned, who will have the courage to act upon what is fact, science, knowledge?).

Such huge existential threats, getting worse every day, seem to generally not get the attention they need and deserve, sometimes to the point of facing censorship or litigation. Small beginnings need to be made and long-term nurtured, starting with reconnecting real people, not just online aliases, in a rational and realistic context.

The composer decided with this work to create such a *small beginning*, a common space to listen and dream together. To create, within the scope of his expertise, a dedicated work of music: a dark dreaming space, inviting other professionals to dream together, to dream music together, closely collaborating in a Covid-proof manner, remotely connecting in a joint effort, creating fresh beginnings for what can become a musical alphabet for Babel*, connecting and working together with specialists from various musical traditions.

In thus connecting, people enlarge their world yet make it come closer and seem smaller, more comprehensible, at a stroke. This is the major benefit of modern technology, without which the creation of this album would have been near impossible. You too are invited to connect, and listen or dream along, to face and escape reality and its daily nightmares, to imagine freely what to do, what to add, what to create: to imagine in the spirit of John Lennon.

* See also the Babel Alphabet paintings by Oscar van Dillen (1993)

Oneirology 2

In Peter Brook's 1979 film *Meetings with Remarkable Men* there is a scene in which musicians will attempt to produce a sound that will make the stones of a valley vibrate. In this re-enacting of a famous scene from Gurdieff's memoirs, Kudsi Erguner is one of the musician-actors performing on the screen. In the movie (and in the book), it is in fact a singer that finally succeeds at this, not the Ney. Oneirology 2 can perhaps be regarded as the ultimate attempt to amend this 42-year-old "failure" and enable Erguner's Ney to finally accomplish this mythical task of producing a music with sounds that will eventually set a complete mountain valley into total vibration, this time in cooperation with van Dillen's electronics/digitalics.

After repeated and careful listenings of Oscar van Dillen's original composition, Kudsi Erguner recorded his Ney for the duration of approximately half an hour, in Paris, leaving it to van Dillen to re-compose and position the improvised sections carefully, in Rotterdam, to the existing composition Oneirology. In this way, the result became

the joint composition envisioned in this collaboration, and presented here as Oneirology 2, Dronescape 6.1.

In Oneirology 2 the Ney is transformed into a listener's guide and companion – not unlike Dante's Virgil or Gilgamesh' Enkidu – on a voyage through the shifting sands of the world of dreams, creating a new synthesis of World Music and Contemporary Composing. Combining traditional sounds from the ancient bamboo flute called Ney with cutting edge modern digital technology, the music becomes an *original world music composition*.

The overall form can largely be described as following an ABA form, slowly breathing, in which the A parts are generally in the lower register, spanning a perfect ninth. The first A part is roughly 12 minutes, the concluding one 14 minutes. The much longer middle part of 28 minutes has several sections, sometimes transitioning into each other, sometimes separated by breathing spaces. The character of Breath and of Breathing has been used deliberately in the electronics/digitalics of the composition, moreover, it is especially emphasized by the recording of the Ney.

Naturally, the very playing of the Ney itself is done by the act of breathing into the instrument, and the reverse, the complementary sound of Erguner inhaling, has been explicitly integrated into the result. Gradually the whole music gradually starts to breathe in and out, producing waves of sound, as if breaking against the beaches of our awareness. These layered structures of breath both create and follow the large, quasi monolithic, form.

After a peaceful beginning with more abstract sound, conflicting structures start to emerge, and low melodies unfold, in reaction and counterpoint to the Ney. Together these create a new harmony, and perhaps a newly to be discovered type of harmony as well.

In music theory, harmony is taught as the simultaneous occurrence of pitches in time, carefully connecting a contrapuntal voice leading of its various layers. In musical perception, all pitches and sounds that are registered by hearing and memory within a certain musical timespan can be called harmony. Harmony is thus much more than mere verticality or progressions of chords, rather it is a

sounding space-time, or a shifting galaxy of melodically performed tones, layered in perception and memory.

The many long high tones in the Ney then bring back stability and orientation in the most turbulent musical moments, with their complex mixture chords. The Ney again acting like a guide in the shifting sands of the compound oneirological sounds, offering stability. Breathing waves of music form the transition to the final section of this work, the subtle microtonal melodies of the Ney interacting with the wavering melodies in the low register, which have slow microtonal vibrations.

In the final part, high reflections of the Ney's tones can be heard, synthesizing the two sound sources: acoustic and digital. These celestial melodies add both height and depth to the harmony and the music at its conclusion.

Tracks

1. Oneirology 2 – duration 54:00

Total duration: 54:00

Dronescapes

More collaborative versions of Dronescape 6.* will be released on OIJ Records when completed.

New Dronescapes are in the making, you can follow Oscar van Dillen and Donemus Records publications by their websites but also e.g. on Twitter.

A word of warning: after careful listening, the world around you may not sound the same any longer.

Kudsi Erguner

Kudsi Erguner (Diyarbakır 1952), is one of the foremost Ney masters of our times, and particularly famed for his activities helping to introduce Ottoman and Sufi music to the world with internationally acclaimed projects and recordings. He lives and works in Paris as a musician, composer, musicologist, teacher, and author.



Erguner comes from a family of Turkish musicians. His contact with many famous musicians from the older generation, who continually passed through his parents' house, and his involvement with various Sufi brotherhoods, whose music and teachings Erguner studied, left their decisive marks on him. He received his training directly from his father, Ulvi Erguner, who was the last great master of the Ney.

Kudsi Erguner studied also architecture and musicology in Paris, he has given concerts and played in major festivals throughout the world and has researched the music of India, Pakistan and

Turkey, grounded diverse music ensembles, recorded numerous albums and has worked with such well-known artists such as Robert Wilson, Peter Gabriel, Maurice Bejart, Carolyn Carlson, Peter Brook, Didier Lockwood, Michel Portal, Tony Gatliff, Marc Minkovsky, Alexandre Desplat, Bartabas, Sarkis, Marcus Stochausen, Nusret Fathi Ali Khan, Christof Lauer, Renaud Garcia Fons, Michel Godard, Jordy Savall, Fazil Say.

Erguner has thus made authoritative contributions to world music. He has documented and revived nearly forgotten musical traditions and brought them to the attention of the Western public, securing them a place within Europe's cultural inheritance in this way he did also initiate the renaissance of the Ottoman Classical and Sufi music in Turkey.

He has devised many original projects for the International Music Festivals. He released more than hundred CD mostly dedicated to the different aspects of the Ottoman music and published four books in French. In 1984, he created the Mevlana association in Paris where he teaches the music and Sufism according to the original tradition. He gives conferences on Sufism and its music all over the world and directs two small communities connected to the Mevlevi tradition: one in Paris and one in Istanbul.

Kudsi Erguner has been designated as a UNESCO Artist for Peace in May 2016. He was also awarded an honorary doctorate by Bulent Ecevit University in Turkey in 2014 and by the University of Arts Audiovisuels Scopje in Makedonia in 2018

Parallel to his concerts and activities, he works as a professor at the Codarts University of the Arts Rotterdam since 2011 and animates a master class (Birun) at the Cini Foundation - Venice every year.

Oscar van Dillen

Oscar Ignatius Joannes van Dillen ('s-Hertogenbosch 1958), is composer and performer of music, professor of music at Codarts University for the Arts in Rotterdam, as well as visual artist. A polyglot and an erudite world citizen, he is also one of the pioneers from the early years of Wikipedia, having been founding president of Wikimedia Nederland and serving as a trustee of the Wikimedia Foundation. Van Dillen has studied a wide variety of musical traditions with many renowned teachers. His music education having started at the age of 7, performing both classical and rock music in his youth, van Dillen first studied North-Indian classical music (sitar, tabla, vocal) with Jamaluddin Bhartiya at the Tritantri School in Amsterdam and bansuri with Gurbachan Singh Sachdev at the Bansuri School of Music in Berkeley, California. Next, he studied classical and jazz flute at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam. He took composition lessons from Misha Mengelberg. As a flutist, he was taught by Lens Derogée and Dieks Visser, and followed masterclasses from Pierre-Yves Artaud, Geoffrey Gilbert and Barthold Kuijken.



After his following postgraduate studies of medieval and Renaissance music with Paul Van Nevel in Leuven (Belgium), he studied classical and contemporary composition with, among others, Dick Raaymakers, Diderik Wagenaar and Gilius van Bergeijk at the Koninklijk Conservatory in The Hague, with Klaas de Vries, Peter-Jan Wagemans and René Uijlenhoet at the Rotterdam Conservatory and with Manfred Trojahn at the Robert Schumann College in Düsseldorf, where he also received lessons in conducting from Lutz Herbig. As a composer he furthermore followed masterclasses from, among others, Isang Yun, George Crumb, Jan van Vlijmen, Marek Stachowski, Zbigniew Bojarski and Gerard Brophy.

A founding member of the Rotterdam School of composers and the author of its manifesto, he currently works as professor of music at the Codarts University of the Arts Rotterdam since 1997, teaching composing, arranging, world music composition, music history and music theory in the Jazz-, the Pop-, the World music, the Classical music, and the Music Education Academies of Codarts.

Oscar van Dillen is the inventor of *original world music composition*, combining strictly composed with improvised classical and folk traditions, and their techniques and mentalities for creating music: a new and contemporary form of art music.

Van Dillen is founder, composer, and artistic director of the Olduvai Ensemble for which he especially creates original world music compositions.

He is a member of Nieuw Geneco and the Dutch-Flemish Society for Music Theory. As of 2020 his scores are published by Donemus. He collaborates with Donemus in publishing his recordings on OIJ Records.

Next to his fulltime work as composer, musician and pedagogue, van Dillen is also a visual artist. As composer, he has been a regular member of various juries, among which the composition prize juries, in the Val Tidone Festival Competitions, since 2013.

Oscar van Dillen's personal website can be found at
www.oscarvandillen.com

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