

# urbanphonix



 **Décor Sonore**

## Artistic direction

Michel Risse

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## Staging collaboration

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## Costumes

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## Partners

The French Ministry of Culture and Communication – DGCA

SPEDIDAM

ADAMI

Le Moulin Fondu – CNAR, Noisy-Le-Sec.

L'Abattoir – CNAR, Chalon-sur-Saône.

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I have never walked  
through the streets of a city  
without being attracted by the sounds of its  
landscape, its architecture, and its urban  
furnishings; with the irresistible urge to listen to  
everything, to taste everything, to play  
with everything, as if I was walking through  
the window display of a huge music store,  
and to then share the most beautiful  
and delicious of my discoveries.

The role of the musician – and more  
generally the artist – no longer seems  
to me to create works that are inherently  
beautiful, but objects that awaken us,  
inform us, and modify the perspectives  
of our way of listening.

How can we make every listening  
moment an encounter, rare and  
priceless? How can we reinvent our  
relationship to music, if not music itself?

How can we be in a constant state of  
invention and bring to life true  
moments of public poetry, free  
from any need for permission,  
justification, explanation?

Is it still possible, in this day and age,  
to move people with such simple  
things as an impromptu concert, an  
unexpected and spectacular sonic  
reading of the city?

Michel Risse



Directed by composer  
Michel Risse, Décor  
Sonore is a unique  
composition and  
production tool, aimed  
at sound creation for  
open spaces and street  
arts since 1985.  
Internationally regarded  
as one of the most  
innovating French  
companies, Décor Sonore  
uses the city as support  
and material for its  
dramatic investigation.  
Its creations indulge in  
sounds, resonances,  
harmonies of natural or  
industrial elements our  
everyday urban life is  
composed of, to offer us a  
unique perception of the  
world. Its unusual productions  
invite us to listen to our sound  
environment differently and  
re-invent our relationship  
to music.



## “Let’s go out!

Let’s walk together through a great modern capital, with the ear more attentive than the eye, and we will vary the pleasures of our sensibilities by distinguishing among the gurglings of water, air and gas inside metallic pipes, the rumblings and rattlings of engines breathing with obvious animal spirits, the rising and falling of pistons, the stridency of mechanical saws, the loud jumping of trolleys on their rails, the snapping of whips, the whipping of flags. We will have fun imagining our orchestration of department stores’ sliding doors, the hubbub of the crowds, the different roars of railroad stations, iron foundries, textile mills, printing houses, power plants and subways.”

Luigi Russolo,  
The art of noise (1913)

urbaphonix

## Un quintet mobile de musique concrète



Without a word, unexpectedly, a traveling five-person crew enters into the soundscape. These explorers play, live and on-site, with the technology, sounds, objects, and people they encounter. Sorts of “Street-Jockeys,” without turntables or synthesizers, the musicians of Urbaphonix listen to their soundscape and compose only with what is already all around us but no one listens to: the mechanical sounds of traffic, the hums of heating ducts and air conditioning vents, bodies, conversations, and, especially, urban furnishings, which serve both as the scenery and as a limitless source of instruments for this instant theater. In order to create something never heard before, unpredictable, and enchanting, their talent lies in their ability to make us hear what is already there, but no one noticed, because no one thought to listen.

Disciples of Luigi Russolo, Pierre Schaeffer and Murray Schafer, they faithfully apply John Cage’s advice: “If a sound disturbs you, listen to it!”

## Meeting the public



Under constant construction and in a perpetual state of discovery, Urbaphonix slides continuously, without lingering, appears where we least expect it, disappears to lure us towards other spaces, leaving walkers free to follow it, to make sure they didn’t dream it...

No need for a manual or initiation to be able to hear this concrete and living music. Through sound, every urban environment gains an unexpected poetic dimension; the ordinary passer-by comes out of his indifference and becomes a curious spectator, a demanding music connoisseur, an active listener. He comes to realize that he, too, is an actor in the soundscape.

## Tuning the city



Urbaphonix gets its inspiration from its very context, which implies an art form that is fundamentally alive, an experience in constant renewal. No two performances are alike. More than that, each happening can only be possible and make sense in the specific place where it unfolds.

Each Urbaphonix stroll brings the audience into an instant micro-symphony, a sonic journey punctuated by discoveries great and small, by moving or comic encounters with places and people.

It is a voyage, a tour, a walking concert, made possible by a self-powered technical system, totally wireless and free from A.C. Mains. The never before heard sounds of the city can be captured, revealed, and mixed in real time thanks to our exclusive audiophile and innovative mobile sound system. Thus, what was till now restricted to “in vitro” studio works, today opens up to the street “in vivo”, surprising and captivating the public in the course of daily life.

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URBAPHONIX IS A TECHNICALLY SELF-SUPPORTING SHOW. IT REQUIRES ONLY A 215 SQ FT (20M<sup>2</sup>) GROUND-FLOOR ROOM WITH POWER SUPPLY TO RECHARGE THE SOUND SYSTEM’S BATTERIES.