



Res-cue. The archive in the mouth

(Self-published, 2020)

Limited edition in a case that includes two cassettes and a book (download included).

Music by Ainara LeGardon. Produced by Xabier Erkizia. All instruments and voices were performed by Ainara LeGardon. Ainara LeGardon, Xabier Erkizia, the *Echolette SE300* tape echo and the recording studio itself collaborated in the composition of "Mixtape 2". Lyrics to "Ixo" by Xabier Erkizia.

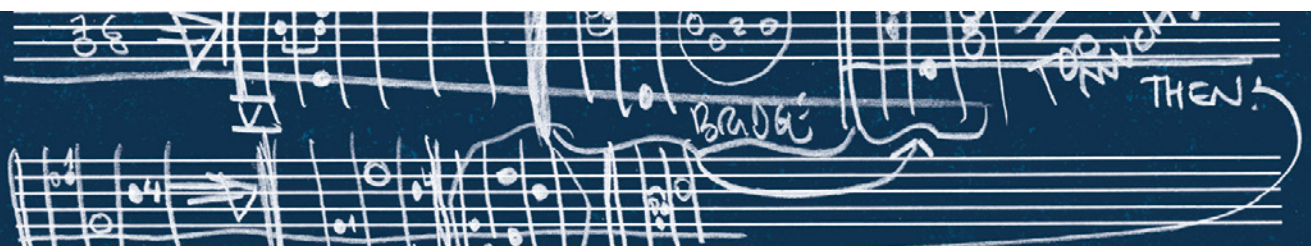
Published with the help of the Basque Government's Department of Culture and Linguistic Policy.

Tracklist Mixtape 1

1. Nashville tuning (2011)
2. Coming to an end (2004)
3. The hands my hand held (2010)
4. Moscardón (2008)
5. Ungrateful (2008)
6. The Wedding (2004)
7. Montblanc (2010)
8. Tape 13 B side ALT (2004)
9. Any other words (2004)
10. Promises (2001)
11. Open D (2007, 2009)
12. Tape 13 Hangover idea (2004)

Tracklist Mixtape 2

1. Ixo (2017)
2. Indescifrables (2018)
3. La duda (2017)
4. Loop + Afinación (2017)
5. Montenegro (2017)
6. Todas las olas (2018)
7. San Jose (2016)
8. Llegando al fin (2017)



Ainara LeGardon **Res-cue. The archive in the mouth**

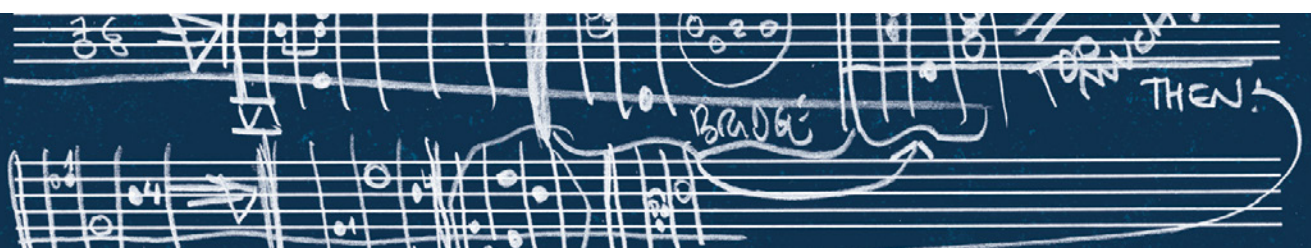
By **Estanis Solsona**

"Is that me?" The question surprised Ainara LeGardon in one of the notebooks she was revising for the study that culminated in this project. This short though complex question, noted down while listening to a home recording in which she didn't quite recognise herself, is crucial today, and serves to summarise the internal search that took place on the way to arriving at "Res-cue" while, at the same time, suggesting the breadth of the question itself. For anyone who's ever felt a modicum of curiosity about the work carried out by musicians during the "back stage" creative process, this work will be a revelation, bringing them closer to the craft behind the work, with a keen view to understanding the more inexplicable aspects of it. Ainara provides us with details on her methodology in a professional manner (her intuitive need to routinely document her working process through notes, instructions, reflections, images and sound recordings, not only as a way to build up her historic archive); however, the body of her exposition deals with her curiosity for ascertaining whether an idea left undeveloped at the time could have other lives later on and, if so, unravelling what makes this possible (for her).

"Is that me?" An observation that seems technical and private on paper inadvertently becomes transcendental, echoing across our nervous system and shattering the icy surface beneath our feet. When that happens, Ainara guides us through an emotional journey (framed within the logic afforded

by the intangible mystery of art), while in the process she herself discovers the depth of the waters and what they conceal. With the precedent set by her 2017 self-titled album, in which she collaborated closely with the sound artist and researcher Xabier Erkizia to open up her music to more instinctive paths, "Res-cue" could never have settled for becoming a conservative approach to her demo archive. The detailed cataloguing of more than 100 tapes, 20 notebooks, dozens of Polaroids and video files would have been any museum curator's dream. However, this project was born to subvert the revision, compilation and showcasing of old material and, instead, take on what she had collected, delve into it and study her response to once-discarded material. What might be the fruit of the Ainara LeGardon of today entering into dialogue with an Ainara who, ten or fifteen years ago, felt she had strayed from the path? These conversations have taken place in a series of listening sessions moulding this exploration, and have even been captured in two valuable poems.

"Res-cue" dispels any prejudices regarding the origins of the muses and the purity of art, such as the somewhat critical notion that if an artist draws on a pool of ideas cultivated in the past, that is because they currently lack inspiration and find it easier to breathe new life into sketches from a more fertile period; or that the inevitable dissection of material resulting from such research-based theoretical work will strip the artistic oeu-



vre of any emotion. Ainara proves both these statements to be false: the former, by diving head first into the creation of something new, stimulated by something that didn't quite convince her at the time (that is, not reproducing it exactly as it was conceived); the latter, by arguing throughout her text how important judgement-based decisions (of a technical, aesthetic nature) are at play in musical composition, which, after all, carry as much weight as impulsive gestures and untamed emotion, because they can both inform and stimulate it. Artists often face the tension between letting themselves go and making a choice, but they rarely engage in an exercise of this nature, one that uncovers (and conveys to us) the fears and valiant reflections on the mutability of identity and memory. She never lacks modesty but becomes increasingly human with each work.

"Is that me?" Time divisions don't work with music. We may attempt to place them in the past, in the present, or project them into a future, but songs escape linear time, transcending the ticking timepiece, because we can always find something new in them, depending on our own evolution as human beings. Many songwriters find their own songs prophetic because they feel they've set the soundtrack to their own experiences years before they take place. And yet could it be that they were simply unable to interpret their intentions until later on? What if, on the other hand, the indecipherable today was set out clearly in black and white yesterday, and the only option is to reinvent? "Res-cue" is subtitled by a stanza by Peter Gizzi, "The archive in the mouth", evoking a tremendously physical image of what it means to find freshness and validity in a once-discarded idea. The con-

tent of the essay is illustrated by two mix-tapes, each approximately 30 minutes long. The first of these is a sample of original recordings extracted from the archive, each recorded on different devices. The second is a series of experiments and new creations based on drafts that were never fully developed (and which only sometimes correspond to the selection on the first tape). When she isolates the harmonium from a song that was once practically finished as if recognizing it as the vital organ today, and uses it to explain the sensory amnesia she feels for the remainder; when she overlaps three different recordings of the same instrumental piece, making it possible for us to imagine them projected onto a screen, observing how they divide and come together by chance; or when she re-imagines a composition named *Montblanc* as *Montenegro*, making it sound whiter and airier than the original, then we understand the scale of her discoveries.

"Is that me?" The creative possibilities that are now opening up to her are manifold. In "Res-cue", she has walked through an extensive landscape from the past, identifying fertile patches for the future, and the implicit wealth of this conclusion transforms those ideas we have come to view as discarded: cast aside or unresolved, yes, but never obsolete. It makes complete sense to imagine this as a lifelong project since such dialogue can always take place through the prism of perspectives not yet known today (as was the case with those found in "Res-cue"). In *Como Lobos* Ainara LeGardon sang: "You don't know how to speak to yourself. Look inside." Can one decode the "me" of today by listening to oneself from another time? "Res-cue" would have it that there's no other way.

