

Doppelklänger

for prepared and amplified piano solo

Clara Maïda

[13'37]

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DAAD of Berlin Commission

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The title *Doppelklänger* is derived from the German word "Doppelgänger".

"Doppelgänger" means "double" and is used in the paranormal field to indicate the ghostly double of a living person, or a phenomenon of bi-location (other self, visible in another point of space).

It is a theme which can be in keeping with the literary field (Jean-Paul, Guy de Maupassant, etc.) as well as the psychiatric one within which one can choose to interpret this phenomenon as a mental disorder of dissociation of the personality.

During my stay in Berlin, as I was experimenting for the first time living abroad over a long period, I related that theme of "Doppelgänger", and that experience of body split or psychic dissociation, to the sensation of exile lived, at times, in a very intensive and painful way. The resulting loss of landmarks, and the impression of wavering were generating a sort of bi-location, which means that one part of the ego felt in Berlin, when the other part was experienced as if it had remained in Paris.

The piece attempts to trace that experience and the act of writing was, in this precise context, lived as a liberating act with the possibility to get rid of this psycho-affective uneasiness and to recover a psychic unity and the sensation of a more defined place, or on the contrary to accept an undefined place.

This wrench or migration process, which took nine months (the time of a pregnancy...), gives its architecture to the piece which is articulated around nine small structures, nice small constructions clearly perceptible, except the last one which is more elliptic, since the process is accomplished. Their organization is going to be gradually shaken, in spite of their persistence to come back, with various alterations (melodic and harmonic migration of the frame, gradual liquidation of the material, etc.).

These structures work on a double level. The first level enunciates a frame made of a few notes whose contours are recurrent and recognizable in spite of the distortions of the material. It accounts for the resistance of the landmarks and of the refusal to give up the behavioural schemes used so far. The second level develops a gravitation of minimal units around these landmarks. It is the driving force, either through the gradual disappearance of these units, or their proliferation, of a possible mutation. One has then a sort of sound duality which is torn between the repetition of almost conjuration formulae and the mobility of "breakaways" of dots and lines inducing an extension of the sound territory.

This already double-sided structure reveals, at the end of its mutation path, another double structure made up of small motifs of three sounds, played on the strings of the piano, which emerge in a fleeting and fragmentary way while some short chromatic curves start to appear. This sort of hidden structure, gradually unveiled, opens to another dimension, induces a rocking bascule towards another sound scene underlined by the timbre generated by the playing on the strings of the instrument.

Double sound scene and source, double structure, double timbre. *Doppelklänger* is not simply the presence of a double sound, but the process, the trajectories of splitting, bi-location, deterritorialization of the sound in several spaces (musical as well as material) and the attempt to maintain a coherence despite these separated entities.

Clara Maïda, 2008