

Shel(l)ter - später... () ...Winter

for clarinet, bassoon, cello, three percussions and electronics

[14'40]

Clara Maïda

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FRENCH MINISTRY OF CULTURE and GMEM Commission

Residency at the GMEM (realization of the live electronics)

ELECTRONIC STUDIO of the TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT (realization of the electronic fixed part)

Technical processing: GMEM

PERCUSSIONS DE STRASBOURG and NOUVEL ENSEMBLE MODERNE

Direction: Lorraine VAILLANCOURT

Shel(l)ter - später... () ...Winter is the first part of a series of four pieces which refers to a very specific space, one of the atomic bunkers in Berlin.

The reduplication of the letter "l" condenses in the title the words "shell" and "shelter", which both evoke the attempt to protect the body against all aggression. But "shell" means at the same time the protection of certain animals (molluscs for example) and a weapon. So the double polarization of this word thus underlines the absurdity, constant in Man, which consists in constructing quite as many objects of destruction and objects of protection against this destruction.

Placed in brackets, this reduplication of the "l", generator of a polyvocality, indicates at the same time a stop and a junction or the transformation of a repeated element, a rupture, a mutation of the structure of a given material or situation, as well as a separation or an imprisonment, the self-destructive perverse effect which all protection is also likely to induce when it leads to isolation.

The sub-title *später... () ...Winter* - which means in German "later... () ...winter" alludes to the hypothesis of an atomic winter which would follow the explosion of several bombs.

In *Shel(l)ter*, the musical writing is "atomic". It results from an assembling of infinitely small particles, which, while energy is accumulating, undergo processes close to nuclear fusion or fission, or a nuclear chain reaction (phenomena observed on the level of the atom and deliberately amplified in the construction of atomic bombs).

The writing is also "genetic", because the disruptions induced in matter call to mind those that can be described on the chromosomal level (crossing-over, exchange of the chromosomal material, during the cell division or meiosis), with the possibility of errors, which generate new forms.

One can talk of "nanomusic" (in reference to nanosciences which observe and manipulate objects on the atomic scale), since this mobility and this transformation of the properties of the musical fabric result from micro-processes that act on the sound particles.

These processes thus generate variations of masses, forms and paths, but also resistances and persistences, which reinforce certain crosshatched, interrupted formulae and a musical material (harmonic, for example) which is intentionally minimal in order to suggest the notion of lost and reduced space.

The atomic thus reminds us that everything is particle, everything is atom, the sound field being considered only as one of the possibilities of the infinite field of matter.

Clara Maïda, April 2009