

AAA (1996)

for 7 musicians. Duration : 13 mn

Commissioned by Ars Mobilis.

Premiered on 16 janvier 1998, à l'Hippodrome de Douai (France), par l'Ensemble Ictus, sous la direction de Georges-Elie Octors.

Instrumentation : flute, clarinet, violin, viola, violoncello, percussion and piano

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AAA was commissioned by Ars Mobilis.

Written in 1996 for flute, clarinet, violin, viola, cello, piano and percussion, this piece is originally an instrumentation of *Image à Rameau*, composed for four wind MIDI controllers (electronic instruments). The idea is to transpose musical behaviors from the world of electronic sounds to the instrumental field while strictly respecting the initial partition.

But, as in any project of this kind, there is obviously overflowing in a way that the piece acquires a new autonomy. Indeed, the instrumental techniques induce musicality that is not contained in the electronic model. I wanted, among others, to find some familiar sounds from my teenage years when I was playing jazz. If the shape and overall structure of the piece remain the same, it is not the same musical language. In one case, the ear focuses on timbres, on the dynamic morphology and on the harmonic colors. In another case, the traditional sounds of the flute, the clarinet, the violin... and the predominance of pitches emphasize the syntactic aspect. In both pieces, it is indeed the same music, but does not express the same thing. The initial pattern, developed throughout the work, is extracted from the harpsichord piece *La Poule* by Jean-Philippe Rameau.

Philippe Leroux

AAA, composed between 1995 and 1996, is a revisited and instrumental version of *Image à Rameau*. Obviously, the work begins with a quotation from the piece *La Poule* by Jean-Philippe Rameau. This quotation is already magnified by a rhythmic accentuation and various instrumental combinations which will generate the entire score.

Soon, we realize that this is not really the caudal part of the « Ramist » pattern that interests Philippe Leroux but its steady beat. The composer installs and combines quickly several methods of variation of this idea: accentuation patterns, dynamic changes, instrumental thickness, etc. yet to create exciting rhythms.

A figuralist would see in *AAA* an attempt, perhaps like Rameau, to describe the pecking of the gallinaceous, their hesitations, their inconstancy. Ornithological metaphor cannot explain the entirety of the work, but becomes very instructive. Heralded by arabesques on flute and clarinet, sometimes inverted, a central section embroiders around the steady pulsation using different interventions that can destabilize it but never annihilate it: a large study of yap where the screams uttered in all directions reflect the depth of space.

Then, follows another section starting with a children's song exposed through a canon, beautiful by its innocence. The entire contour of the melody comes from the variations used on the original pulsation. After, another section that apparently introduces itself as a distraction from the primacy of the beat, playing on the arabesques and the resonances of

the keyboards, is soon wonderfully stifled by the stubborn pattern which will lead to the end. The idea is even clearer than it was. A lot of synchronized rhythms; especially in the movement that precedes the return of the main pattern. It's an unrestrained race where we find one of the methods used in the violin concerto (*d'Aller*: sections (shortened each time by the beginning, elongated by the end) are aligned along the steps of an upward chromatic scale.

Dominique Druhen