

Later gambler

for solo contrabass clarinet and a 6-channel electroacoustic device

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(13'43)

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Later gambler is the second part of *Lostery 2* which is part of *Lostery*, a triptych of sound and visual installations and of works for solo contrabass clarinet and a 6-channel electroacoustic device.

The title of the series condenses the English words "lost" and "Lottery", thus expressing a pessimistic state of mind according to which what has been brought into play leads most of the time to failure. It accounts for the social and economic crisis that we have been experiencing over several years and for the increasing inequality between people.

Lostery questions two structural parameters which have a significant impact on our lives - on the one hand, the gearwheels of the societal machine in which we are carried along and which mostly conditions our destinies, and on the other hand, the notion of chance which plays a part in the path that we will or will not be able to follow. It divides individuals on the side of the more or less lucky or unlucky according to the socio-political and economic system of the country in which they were born (more or less favoured or equalitarian), their life in country at war or at peace, the socio-cultural level of the family they have been brought up in, the possibility to study or not, the greater or lesser freedom of choice given to them, etc.

Each part of the series refers to a game, whether a strategy or a tactical one, or a game of chance or gambling.

Lostery 1 alludes to chess and evokes the political crisis that rages all over the world and the failure of the political strategies implemented. Chess ("jeu d'échecs", in French) therefore becomes a game of failure ("échec", in French).

Lostery 2, of which *Later gambler* is the second part, rather insists on the impact of chance on our fates and develops a sound environment that recreates the atmosphere of casinos and places dedicated to games of chance and gambling.

Lostery 3 refers to another kind of gambling, poker.

The electroacoustic part of *Later gambler* takes up again elements from the 6-channel electroacoustic work *Ipso Lotto*, first part of the section. The musical gestures mimic the morphologies of the sound of machines recorded in game rooms and casinos (the drop of dice or balls, shaking and rolling gestures) and use the same pitch frequencies. The various modes of playing of the contrabass clarinet provide for a palette of varied timbres merged with the electronic sounds.

In this second work of the section, *Ipso Lotto's* sequence of kaleidoscopic sound objects is articulated this time with mirror-like instrumental objects, and forms a new succession of redistributions of chances. These varied combinations at each enunciation, as if recomposed at each "throw of the dice", involve this time a human presence in the virtual and poetised games room, that of the performer who seems to have lost all control and has been carried away in the insane gamble which consists in believing, for instance, that the dice thrown on a table or the chips placed on a roulette will lead to success.

The visual installation placed behind the performer includes several visual elements and objects related to games of chance. A huge abstract machinery is projected onto a screen and on the white shirt of the performer who seems parcelled and trapped by an obscure mechanism which completely randomly casts the dice. The interlocked graphical motifs evoke the complex gearwheels of a world beyond control. Their black/white duality recalls us that the game is binary. We win ("jackpot") or we lose ("jack shit", nothing in slang). It is double or quits, all or nothing. Five Bingo machines are placed on black stands on which built objects (spheres of various sizes, small cubes) present the same abstract black and white graphics as that of the machinery, thus creating a connection between the objects related to the games (Lotto balls, dice) and the projected image. They seem to be debris rejected by a system with an inflexible mechanics.

Clara Maïda, December 2016