

Mutatis mutandis

for twelve amplified strings

Clara Maïda

(12' 56)

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RESONANZ ensemble - Conducted by Stefan GEIGER

The title *Mutatis mutandis* is a Latin expression which literally means: "what has to be changed being changed".

It indicates that once the necessary changes have been made, a fundamental connection between two situations is possible if we exclude their details and their specific context.

I opted for a kind of semantic shift and I interpreted this expression in the following way: "what has to be changed being changed, which new situation can be generated by these changes?".

The word "mutation" being derived from this Latin word, I chose to make the sound material undergo different kinds of mutations which evoke the genetic mutations.

A mutation is an irreversible and hereditary modification of the genetic information. It can be induced by an error of copy of the genetic material during the cellular division or by exposure to mutagenic agents (radiations, virus, etc.).

The whole piece explores a mutation process of the musical objects and situations. Some sound elements are duplicated, but their duplication is not completely identical. These modifications appear at a minimal level (a quasi "cellular" dimension of the sound). These "errors" or these microscopic shifts (which operate on the micro-intervals or micro-durations level) thus induce a migration of the duplicated sound elements and a plasticity of the whole musical matter, for the addition of tiny, but numerous, disruptions have an impact on the formal development.

Although different situations and heterogeneous materials are juxtaposed (such as the sequences of a cinematographic parallel montage), the unity of this sound organism persists since it is not based on the constituents of the materials and situations, but rather on the way their connections are traversed and affected by this force for change, this structural instability, this mutational proliferation of the material.

This mutation-migration of the sound material operates not only on the musical level itself (in the field of the pitches or on the durations level, for instance) but also on the space level. The elements move from one instrument to the other, step by step or through stereophonic rebounds, from one place of the stage to another. Their moving duplication takes place in a very rigorous space writing and contributes to the sensation of an endlessly diffracted musical matter, moment by moment, from one point to the other in the stage space.

Clara Maïda, August 2008