ALIREZA FARHANG COMPOSER
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Mots de jeu

Audio file
Entire piece

Instrumentation
5 Female Voices and Electronics

Duration
12'

Commissioned by
CIRM

Date and place of composition
Autumn 2018, Paris, Nice

Premiere
•December 9, 2018, Nice, France •Festival Manca •Ensemble Vocal Mort Vocis

Computer Music Designer
Alireza Farhang/Camille Giuglaris

NOTE

Mots de jeu is born of the challenge to compose a musical work built on the sensitive and emotional content of a text, and thereby to create what could be called a speech gesture. Beyond the abstract meaning of words (the signified), the composition seeks to capture the vocal gestural imprint of poetry and use it as both a morphological and structural model for the entire work, acting as a counterpoint to the signifier. From a technical perspective, the piece involves reproducing phonemes and generating sounds using formant synthesis [2] in the OpenMusic programming environment (OM-Chant library),[3] and producing a sound that gives the illusion of an augmented human voice. The ambiguous quality produced by formant synthesis echoes the challenges specific to the language of several poetic texts drawn from the collection L'Espace du dedans by Henri Michaux. The language of these poems is constantly revealing new discoveries, and their original and emerging poetic content can never be fully grasped,[4] opening the door to multiple points of view in a process of composition that is constantly moving back and forth between the microscopic and local dimension of the language and its models (phonemes, syllables and words) and the macroscopic dimension (syntactic and semantic). The result is a superposition of formal structures organised according to the vocal gestures selected for their paradigmatic function as form generators. As we will explain below, this has an impact not only on the sound structures but also on the spectral morphology of the whole piece, as the work on vocal formants necessarily has an incidence on the harmonic and textural dimension of the synthesis process and its combination with the voices.