

..., dass spinnt...

for string quartet

Clara Maïda

(9'50)

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FRENCH MINISTRY OF CULTURE and ARDITTI QUARTET commission

ARDITTI QUARTET

The piece is dedicated to Irvine ARDITTI and ARDITTI QUARTET

...,dass spinnt... is the second piece of the series *www*, these three letters indicating, as everyone knows, the access to the Internet, the initials of the World Wide Web.

As in the first piece of the series – *...who holds the strings...* – the title alludes to a network of threads.

The German word "spinnen" refers to the spinning action (to spin the cobweb, for the spider).

...,dass spinnt... is an incomplete sentence, with no grammatical subject, which can be translated as "...who weaves..." or as "...who spins a web...". And the web can also be the Web, i.e. a ramified space with no point of centralization.

The title plays on the double meaning of the word "spinnen" which evokes at the same time this weaving of threads and, in a more colloquial use, the reproach addressed to a person who acts in an extravagant way, with a kind of slight madness. "Du spinnst!" corresponds to: "Are you crazy!". Besides, in French, the expression "avoir une araignée au plafond" (literally, to have a spider on the ceiling) also means "to be mad". And the English word "spin", which evokes both a revolving motion and the spider's work, refers in quantum physics to the intrinsic kinetic momentum of particles.

One can see that a network – a semantic one, this time – goes across different languages. The "spider on the ceiling" converges toward "spinnen" with the idea of craziness in the background, to whatever degree of expression or intensity, and towards the *spin* of particles.

The musical writing works its way between the web (with both meanings of the term), the psychic turbulences and those of matter, or the propagation of sound waves.

As a matter of fact, with this repetition of a same letter in a movement which could last forever, this symbol *www* visually evokes a waveform and reminds us that any matter, according to the very poetic theory of strings developed by modern physics (even though it is still to be verified), might be not made of particles but of invisible strings which vibrate with different frequencies.

In the piece, all these filaments never stop intertwining and following their path, creating an extremely kinetic sound diagram crossed by searing intensities. In this very dense and elastic network, the connections circulate from one instrument to the other. The trajectories weave an ensemble of traces in all directions, thus creating ever more disordered, ever crazier extensions, proliferations, with numerous junctions and with a complex temporality.

The tangle unravels endlessly, except for a few anchor points that get stuck from time to time on a kind of circular and repetitive mechanical device, in particular the one concluding the piece.

Clara Maïda, November 2013