

CRUEL SPIRALS

I have composed “Cruel Spirals” during the spring 2007. This cycle of melodies is composed on existing texts written by the American poet Jerome Rothenberg, who I have met in San Diego, California.

This composition is divided in 9 pieces in which I have included 3 different interlaced cycles organized around a symmetric structure: ABBCBCBBA.

The A cycle consists in the opening and the ending of “Cruel Spirals”. It is composed on “A Poem for the Cruel Majority”, a large text which I have separated in two unequal parts. The same musical material is used in the first and the last piece : a sort of parody of an incantation, very energetic and sarcastic, based on irregular and frequently broken rhythmic patterns.

The B cycle is a series of “lamenti” composed on Rothenberg’s “Fourteen Stations”, poems to accompany Arie Galles's charcoal drawings derived from World War II aerial views of the principal Nazi extermination camps. I have selected five of those 14 poems, successively Khurbn, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen, Sobibor and Ravensbrück (to which survived the mother of my wife). The music of those five *lamenti* is very hieratic, organized on an extremely slow pulsation of the bass drum on which the voice and all the instruments express their figures on scales in quarter of tones.

The C cycle is consisting in 2 *intermezzi* : “Anger : a dream” and “Song at Nightfall”. Those pieces are like two “scherzi” in this work.

“Cruel Spirals” is commissioned by the ensemble ICE with the help of the French-American Fund for the music.