

Outside Phrases

by Héloïse Werner (2021)

commissioned by CoMA for the CoMA Festival 2022

INSTRUMENTATION

The piece is written in open score.

The group of musicians is divided into three sub-groups (HIGH, MIDDLE, LOW). It does not matter if one group is slightly larger than the other, but there should be at least three performers per sub-group.

The sub-groups are defined by the tessitura of the instruments or voices.

Instrumentalists and singers can perform this piece together. Instrumentalists are also welcome to use their singing voice if they wish.

Whether a singer or instrumentalist, each performer is invited to speak text during this piece.

TEXT

Avivant un agréable goût d'encre de Chine, une poudre noire pleut doucement sur ma veillée.

by Arthur Rimbaud
from *Phrases, Les Illuminations* (1886)

TRANSLATION

Deepening a pleasant flavour of Chinese ink, a black powder falls gently on my vigil.

translation by A.S. Kline (2002)

PERFORMANCE NOTES

As a French person living in the UK, I am interested in the interplay between language and identity, especially in performance.

In this piece, I am interested in exploring how performers respond to text that is a) abstract in its nature and b) not necessarily in their native language, so that there isn't any meaning attached to the words.

During the piece, performers are invited to respond to specific words through abstract sounds, in whichever way feels good and instinctive. They are invited to speak a word and after a short pause, perform an abstract sound (A.S.) that arises naturally and instinctively from having spoken that word. An abstract sound can comprise vocalisation and/or physical gestures, if this feels natural to the performer. For the spoken text, performers should feel free to vary dynamics, speed and styles of delivery - from whispered to very loud - there is no right or wrong and variety is good!

Performers should stop at boxes with a pause (fermata) in them.

Throughout the piece, the words get gradually replaced by abstract sounds and at the end of the piece, we are left with only the abstract sounds - an improvised kind of new language.

Outside Phrases

for CoMA

Music: Heloise Werner (2021)

Text: Arthur Rimbaud

	A	B	C	D
	c. 45"	c. 30"	c. 15"	c. 30"
HIGH	☺	☺	SPOKEN Goût → ☺ → Abstract sound Pleut → ☺ → A.S. un → ☺ → A.S. une → ☺ → A.S.	PLAYED, SUNG or BOTH ☺
MIDDLE	SPOKEN Avivant → ☺ → Abstract sound Agréable → ☺ → A.S. Doucement → ☺ → A.S. Poudre noire → ☺ → A.S.	☺	☺	SPOKEN (ONLY ONCE AND IN YOUR OWN TIME) “Avivant un agréable goût d’encre de Chine, une poudre noire pleut doucement sur ma veillée.” ☺
LOW	☺	SPOKEN d’encre de chine → ☺ → Abstract sound sur ma veillée → ☺ → A.S.	☺	SPOKEN (ONLY ONCE AND IN YOUR OWN TIME) “Avivant un agréable goût d’encre de Chine, une poudre noire pleut doucement sur ma veillée.” ☺

c. 2'

	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
	c. 10"	c. 10"	c. 10"	c. 20"	c. 20"	c. 10"	c. 5"
H	☺	same as C →		→ A.S. only →	→ solo performer: A.S. only →	☺	
M	same as A →		☺	same as A →	→ A.S. only →	→ solo performer: A.S. only →	→ same solo: A.S. only
L	☺	☺	same as B →	→ A.S. only →	→ solo performer: A.S. only →	☺	

c. 1'25"

	L	M	N	O	P	Q
	c. 5"	c. 5"	c. 10"	c. 20"	c. 10"	c. 10"
H	☺	☺	same as C →	→ A.S. only →	→ solo A.S. →	☺
M	☺	same as A →	→ A.S. only →	→ solo A.S. →	☺	
L	same as B →	→ A.S. only →	→ solo A.S. →	→ solo A.S. →		

c. 1'

	R	S	T	U
	c. 5"	c. 5"	c. 5"	c. 15"
H	A.S. →			→ solo A.S. →
M	☺	A.S. →	☺	
L	☺	☺	A.S. →	☺

c. 30"

TOTAL c. 5'