

two pianos – 1992

Duration: 17', for 2 pianos 8 hands

Points-Méandres-Rouages-Circuits-Runes

Quatuor pour deux pianos

Quatuor pour deux pianos consists of five movements in uninterrupted succession. Each of them develops its own material within a common structure: progressive accumulation – thematic chording – liquidation. Each new movement is built around more elaborate material, obtained by casting a synthetical eye on a "moment" from the preceding movement. The titles of the various pieces refer to the generating material. Each of the movements designates a particular disposition of the four pianists at the two pianos. Although this lends visual impact to the entire quartet (obviously lost on disc), there is no sense in which the staging goes beyond basic instrumental requirements.

Points – with one pianist at the keyboard and another in the strings of each piano – develops a scale in asymmetric intervals (quarter tones in the bass, half tones in the middle range f-e, and three quarter in the high range) by means of selected harmonics in the bass strings. The central choral brings the ambitus back to the chromatic range.

Méandres – with two pianists at each keyboard – is an evolutionary polyphony in so far as each new entrance imperceptibly modifies the initial meander. Starting from the chromatic range circumscribed by *Points*, this movement attains the extreme register of the keyboard, passing through the thematic chording arising from thirteen intermingled voices.

Rouages – one pianist on the left, three on the right – recycles epiphenomenal cells of the preceding movements as components of a relentless machine, somewhat concerto-like manner.

In **Circuits**, *Méandres*' companion piece, the four pianists are together at the piano on the right. They execute by turns a canon of responses upon a reflex phrase that covers the entire keyboard at first, but which progressively resolves itself in the initial chromatic range.

Runes – one pianist on the right and two string players on the left – concludes this large concentric form with a reflection on the harmonic traces of the preceding pieces, polarized around the center of the range (B). Real and harmonic sounds are brought together for the first time.

Quatuor pour deux piano has been premiered by Le Bureau des Pianistes in 1992.