

two pianos – 1989
Duration: 23', for 2 pianos 4 hands
Expansion-Divergence-Effacement
To Laurence Cornez

Dynamiques for two pianos is a reflection on the nature of time in three uninterrupted studies. It explores to what extent a dispersal of energy (positive or negative) embodied in a passage of time can impart movement to a static auditory situation, above and beyond any anecdotic elements likely to nourish this 'progression'. What gaps does time exploit in apparently stable systems to make them enlarge or grow older ?

In **Expansion**, a study in intensities, an exogenous developmental intention is applied to a minimal material. A few staccato bass notes and their resonances are treated in such a way that each accidental coincidence is exploited as an opportunity for a qualitative change, causing an increase in intensity. This imperialist process – continuous except for a retrospective phase that allows one to take stock of the distance travelled – must necessarily result in a monstrous ballooning of the original material.

Divergence deals with the duration of two contrary evolutions. Piano I effects a continuous and cyclical acceleration, returning to its initial speed at the moment of its greatest acceleration. Other audio parameters are correlated, so that acceleration also affects pitch – like on a tape recording – and, in a looser sense, intensity. Piano II, for its part, executes a slowing down of the same nature. The outcome of this double process is guaranteed by the fact that the two divergent progressions arise from complementary aspects of a single theme, itself associated with a central tempo that they may adopt at the same time only by happenstance. In this version, the convergence occurs in the middle of the second cycle, whence originates the generating theme, necessarily 'consonant', that also controls the beginning of the third movement.

Effacement, a study in pitch, works the slow dissolution of the central theme by dislocating the interval relationships of which it is composed. The end of this great *smorzando* reverts to immobile sounds isolated in space, a long-delayed solution to the enforced mobility that runs throughout the piece.

Dynamiques is dedicated to Laurence Cornez, with whom I premiered it in Brussels in 1989.