

Sufi Letter: D(àl)

Duration: 12', for clarinet, percussions,
piano and string trio (conductor ad lib).

Commissioned by the United
Instruments of Lucilin. (Luxembourg).



In 1999, I found by chance a set of Sufi tables revealing the keys of the Da'Wah (secret incantation method). The tables present supposed relations between Arab letters, god's qualities and attributes, numbers, elements, planets, zodiac signs, perfumes, etc., and constitute one of the biggest symbolic system ever established.

D(àl), commissioned and premiered by United Instruments of Lucilin, is the third piece inspired by those tables, here by their forth column, connecting Dayyân, 65, terrible, hostility, earth, taurus, sun, to what I join dhikr (hypnotic repetitiv prayer), dervish, the notes D and do. The project neither is to devote myself publically to esotericism nor to vainly join back with the spirit of the ritual, but to use that complex systemic in order to be guided out of a pure combinatory field without recourse to any naturalistic legitimation.

Technically, D(àl) is a double process of setting in rotation. Two musical matters work in dephasing : the first – continuous and infra-chromatic – accelerates to the left ; the second – uncontinuous and chromatic – slows down to the right. Those divergent processes make them meet in a pulsated continuity based on the turkish Aksak rythm. Those two gyratory movements extend by the progressive widening of the intervals constituting their subjacent pitch scales, passing through theoretical oriental divisions of octave from 17 degrees to the pentatonic scale. This piece is the opposite of a decantation: the fusion between two elements through the centrifugal force.