

Sufi Letter: Kh(à') (Skif)

Duration: 17', for string quartet and electronics. Commissioned by Transit Festival (Leuven), with the support of French-speaking Community of Belgium - department of classical music



With this piece, I am continuing the composition of *Sufi Letters*, a vast project of 28 compositions begun in 2000, freely inspired by symbolic scenes from Sufi mysticism. Each Letter is a meditation on the boundaries of consciousness and the paradoxes of time, and they share multiple analogies, such as material, formal relations, style, meaning or instrumental effects, with the others. *Kh(à')*, the 15th stone or this edifice, is among Letters with a part of electronics: Z1 for viola and piano, Z3 for trombone and S2 for an ensemble of 11 musicians.

The principle of *Kh(à')* is pitting the intimacy and profundity of the string quartet against a shrill and tempestuous electronic environment. The whirling, tumultuous sounds attempt to make the concentration of the chamber music burst into pieces. The little skiff lost in this furious ocean that reaches the horizon stubbornly resists being swallowed up in the uproar around it, taking a chance at crossing the dark waters. *Kh(à')* is a dream of crossing over.

The composition unites two seemingly irreconcilable universes, but in fact, the quartet never stops integrating and transforming the noises and sounds around it – it is from this very chaos that it draws its power and its cohesion.

The electronics in Sufi Letter: Kh(à') (Skif) was commissioned by the French-speaking Community of Belgium and was premiered on October 28th, 2012, by Quatuor Danel and Centre Henri Pousseur during Transit Festival.